Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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E-mail message tries to stop NMC board meeting today. **PAGE 3**

New Saipan mayor sets 12 goals for his administration. **PAGE 7**

Let me be clear. We will neither retreat nor surrender. It is not an option. We will face each challenge head on and each opportunity with the strength of the people by our side.

'NO RETREAT, NO SURRENDER'

Fitial, Inos vow to bring prosperity back to CNMI

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos said they will continue working to bring prosperity back to the CNMI and will not back down in the face of economic and federalization challenges, as they took their oaths of office at past 3pm yesterday before an estimated crowd of 2,000.

But unknown to many, Fitial and Inos were sworn into office at the stroke of midnight on Monday with no more than 40 individuals present, mostly family

See NO RETREAT on Page 4

PAGE INFORMATION

- **See Pages 13 and 14 for more pictures**

New speaker: FY2010 budget bill in 30 days

Newly sworn in House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) vowed to pass a balanced Fiscal Year 2010 budget bill in 30 days starting yesterday, which marked the inaugural session of the 17th House of Representatives on Capital Hill.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan administered the oath of office for the 20 members of the House before a large crowd of dignitaries that included Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, off-island dignitaries and officials, Cabinet members, and former lawmakers.

See story on Page 6

Senate prexy sets 3 goals to rebuild CNMI

Members of the 17th Senate took their oath of office yesterday, pledging to work together and setting goals to address the struggling economy and rebuild the Commonwealth.

Rota Sen. Paul A. Manglona, who was elected Senate president, vowed to resolve during his term three goals: stabilization of the Retirement Fund, to have a functional and responsive public health system, and develop a workable plan for utility and land use needs.

See story on Page 6

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, how would you rate your level of optimism with the second term of the Fitial administration?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Pace Talks
Yemen's president said he is ready to talk to al-Qaida members who renounce violence.
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Electric, hybrid and small cars will grab center stage at the Detroit auto show this week.
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Unplugged
NBC said Sunday it decided to pull the plug on the Jay Leno experiment.
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Local

Sale of defunct factory's property OK'd

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court yesterday ordered the sale of a property occupied by a defunct garment manufacturer in Susupe to pay a former garment worker who had won a discrimination lawsuit against the company.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson ordered the sale of property of the former Grace International Inc. to satisfy the judgment in favor of Xian Xiaoli.

Munson stated that a written order would be forthcoming.

The judge also ruled that there will be a filing for additional attorney's fees for Xiaoli in one week and that the defense has until Feb. 5, 2010, to file a response.

Munson set the hearing for additional attorney's fees for Feb. 18, 2010, at 9am.

In 2007, Xiaoli filed a discrimination lawsuit against Grace International, alleging that she acquired a disability during the course of her third year of work at the factory and that her contract was not renewed because of this.

Joseph Horey, counsel for Xiaoli, said that Grace International has closed operations on Saipan, defaulted in the lawsuit, and has not paid the judgment.

The federal court entered a judgment in Xiaoli's favor in the total amount of $78,103. Due to interest and fees, the total amount due now reaches $102,011.32.

Horey asked the court to transfer the title to Grace's leasehold property to Xiaoli or transfer to her all of Grace's rights to rental payments for the property in partial satisfaction of the judgment.

In court papers filed on Dec. 16, 2009, Horey said two prospective buyers offered to purchase Grace International's factory site, with proceeds to be applied to the satisfaction of the judgment.

The lawyer disclosed that Golden Bridge Corp. had already deposited $115,000 to purchase the site, while Huang Shun Corp. had already deposited $131,017 and offered to pay up to at least $155,700.

Richard W. Pierce, counsel for Grace International, told the court they had a proposed order.

At yesterday's hearing, attorney G. Anthony Long, counsel for interested party, argued that the representative of Grace International did not have the power of attorney to represent Grace.

Horey petitioned the court for additional attorney's fees.

Pierce said there would be objections to the fees.

Jose Tudela
NMC Business Student

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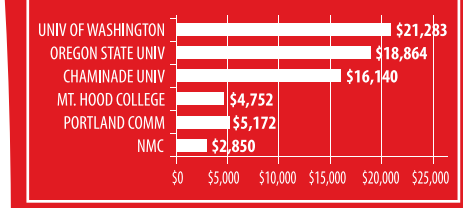

Spring 2010 Semester Dates

Registration
January 11 to January 15, 2010

Late Registration (Last day to submit admissions application)
January 16, 2010

First Day for Fall Classes
January 19, 2010

English Placement Tests
Jan 12 (Tue) 9am-12pm Rm A-6
Jan 13 (Wed) 1pm-4pm Rm A-6
Jan 14 (Thu) 5pm-8pm Rm A-6
Jan 15 (Fri) 9am-12pm Rm A-6

Math Placement Tests
Jan 12 (Tue) 10am-12pm Rm A-9
Jan 14 (Thu) 5pm-7pm Rm A-9

For more information, log on to www.nmcnet.edu or contact the Office of Admission and Records at 234-5498 extension 1537.

Need financial assistance?
Contact the NMC Financial Aid Office at (670) 234-5498 ext. 1527/1526

A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.

Saipan and Rota Golf Concierge

In conjunction with **Golf Digest Online** in Japan, on Jan. 1 the **Marianas Visitors Authority MVA** launched a special online promotion for the "See My Marianas Golf Campaign 2010."

The MVA made all arrangements for the shooting trip for the promotion. The crew visited Saipan and Rota from Oct.6-9 last year and carried out shootings at all six golf courses and numerous tourism sites. Special web pages titled **"Saipan and Rota Golf Concierge"** are now uploaded on the site, featuring different golf experiences in the Northern Marianas and targeting three different segments: beginner golfers (especially women), repeaters and group golfers.

In addition, the MVA has been working with Golf Digest Online to produce the new promotional **"Marianas Golf Mini-book,"** which will be distributed at various consumer events in Japan.

In fiscal year 2009, 6% of visitors from Japan named golf as their primary travel plan while in the Northern Marianas.

HAFA ADAI & TIROW WAY
MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

This Tourism Tuesday space is provided by Saipan Tribune

E-mail message tries to stop NMC board meeting today

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
Moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An e-mail message from an anonymous source tried yesterday to stop the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents from holding a scheduled special meeting today, the sole agenda of which is personnel matters at the college.

Fernandez

Saipan Tribune learned that the e-mail message was circulated en masse on campus just before 1pm yesterday, prompting the NMC management to call for security help from the Department of Public Safety.

The message, a copy of which was provided the *Saipan Tribune,* said that if the board will pursue today's meeting, a bomb will be detonated in a classroom with students in it before the Chinese New Year, or Feb. 14.

Highly placed sources at the campus disclosed that both federal and local law enforcement agencies are now investigating the source of the e-mail.

NMC was conducting enrollments on campus yesterday. All employees and students were immediately advised about the e-mail and were ordered to vacate the area until the police finished its assessment.

People were immediately sent to the college's open field, which serves as its evacuation site. Police also closed down all roads leading to the campus, diverting passing motorists to other routes.

NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez later allowed college staff and students to go home yesterday.

In a statement sent to *Saipan Tribune* at 6pm, Fernandez announced that the campus will reopen and normal operations will resume today, Jan. 12. She indicated that class registration for the Spring 2010 semester will continue as scheduled, along with the scheduled events and activities on campus.

When contacted yesterday, NMC board chair Janet King confirmed receiving the e-mail threat. However, she held firm to her decision to hold the special meeting today, saying the board will not negotiate with or be intimidated by the e-mail threat.

"The Board of Regents will still hold its special meeting [today]. Each member knows that if they are concerned for their safety, they may call in. Speaking for myself personally, I will attend in person. I have advised the FBI and DPS and other agencies of this, and I'm cooperating with them," she said.

King added that the NMC president, during yesterday's incident, followed all safety protocols and communication protocols immediately upon receipt of the e-mail message.

Don't let the flu get to you

Red Cross urges everyone to get vaccinated

The H1N1 (swine) flu virus is still prevalent across the nation and the American Red Cross encourages everyone to get vaccinated against the virus, now that the vaccine is widely available.National Influenza Vaccination Week, which is on Jan. 10-16, serves as an opportunity for people to learn how to prevent the spread of the flu and to encourage people and their loved ones to get vaccinated against both H1N1 and seasonal flu. To find out where vaccinations are offered, call the DPH Emergency Operations Center at 236-8797.

"The H1N1 flu continues to be a health threat, so this is no time to be complacent," said Sharon Stanley, chief nurse and director, Red Cross Disaster Health and Mental Health Services. "The supply for the vaccine is no longer an issue, and we don't know whether another wave of H1N1 will occur. The best way to protect yourself and your loved ones is by being vaccinated."

John Hirsh, executive director for the NMI Chapter of the Red Cross, expressed the chapter's commitment to being proactive in getting information out there regarding H1N1. Hirsh also noted that the chapter has passed out preparedness material to some of the larger employers on island to inform them and their employees about how to prepare to deal with the pandemic flu.

In the fall of 2009, the supply of H1N1 vaccine was limited, but now the vaccine is readily available. The vaccine was developed in the same manner as the seasonal flu vaccine, manufactured using the same standards and quality control measures and is considered safe.

Even though the number of people getting the flu is decreasing, the H1N1 virus is still a threat. In the past, seasonal flu usually peaked in January or February and occurred as late as May. H1N1 first appeared in the spring of 2009, and reoccurred in the fall. Officials for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention caution that they still don't know what seasonal flu outbreaks will be like this year, and if there will be additional waves of H1N1.

Besides vaccination, there are also other simple steps to take to help prevent the spread of the flu:

- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve – cough into the elbow area, not hands.
- Wash hands often, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home if sick.

The Red Cross has educational tools available to help households, schools and workplaces be well informed and promote healthy habits that help reduce the spread of the flu. Visit RedCross.org or www.nmi.redcross.org for more information. ***(ARC)***

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Cager, two others nabbed for alleged burglary, theft

A known basketball player and two other men were arrested over the weekend in separate burglary and theft incidents on Saipan.

Freddy T. Pelisamen, 28, a well-known basketball player in the CNMI, was arrested on Friday for burglary and theft.

Julian M. Sablan and Terrence C. Cabrera were arrested on Saturday for burglary, theft, and criminal mischief.

At yesterday's hearing, Superior Court associate judge Kenneth Govendo imposed a $1,000 cash bail for Pelisamen's temporary liberty.

Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman imposed a $25,000 cash bail each for the temporary release of Sablan and Cabrera.

Detective Jesse J. Stole stated in his report that a relative of Pelisamen called the Department of Public Safety last Nov. 21 to report that Pelisamen broke into his storage room in Chalan Lau Lau and stole an electric coconut grinder and electric sharpening machine.

Stole said that last Dec. 9, the victim called DPS again to inform them that he saw the stolen items at the Number One College Market in Finasisu.

Stole said he responded and, with the consent of the store owner, seized the electric coconut grinder, an ice crushing machine, and the electric sharpening machine.

The detective said that last Thursday he interviewed Pelisamen about the stolen items and that the defendant admitted taking them from the storage room and selling them for $30 to the store.

With respect to Sablan and Cabrera, Detective Steven Castro stated that the two burglarized the Internet Café in Afetnas by shattering the glass door with a rock.

The defendants allegedly stole five computer monitors and three computer modems.

Sablan and Cabrera allegedly sold the items to David Market in Koblerville.

Police recovered the items from the store. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

NO RETREAT

From Page 1

members, in one of the functions rooms at the Fiesta Resort & Spa in Garapan.

The 3pm ceremony yesterday at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe was their public inauguration, which started with a red carpet walk of dignitaries, followed by the sawii/kulu, or the traditional blowing of the horn.

In his 15-minute inaugural address, Fitial said the people of the CNMI and its partners in the Pacific "will see a revitalized Commonwealth—a place that we proudly call home and visitors are anxious to visit and conduct business."

Inos, in his inaugural address, said he will do everything in his power "to bring prosperity back to the Commonwealth."

The government's resources plummeted by some $100 million in just one year due to a drop in tourist arrivals, the demise of the once mighty garment industry, the pullout of Japan Airlines and other foreign investors, among other factors.

Fitial said he and his opponents in the gubernatorial race have now come together "as there is much more we must do to bring prosperity back to our beautiful islands."

Inos, the first appointed lieutenant governor in CNMI history before being elected to office in November, said "much has been accomplished during our first term, but there is still so much more we must do to bring prosperity back to our beautiful islands."

He said over the next five years, the Fitial administration "will continue to improve" the way the government provides critically needed services, will continue to streamline government operations and reduce costs, seek out economic opportunities for all citizens, will continue efforts to improve medical care in the CNMI, will continue efforts to bring clean, reliable, and affordable energy to the islands, and will continue to represent the CNMI people in its dealings with its regional partners in the Pacific and with the federal government.

Federalization

The governor said he has worked diligently since 2001 to ensure that the Commonwealth's freely chosen relationship with the United States meets the economic needs of the CNMI people, adding that he will continue to work toward the full realization of the promise of the Covenant with the U.S.

"Let me be clear. We will neither retreat nor surrender. It is not an option. It is not a consideration. We will face each challenge head on and each opportunity with the strength of the people by our side," he said.

Fitial, who is only the second governor in CNMI history to be re-elected into office, had sued the U.S. government over federalization.

But in his inaugural address, Fitial said his administration will continue to openly extend its hand to the federal government, along with friends in the Pacific region, the CNMI Legislature and Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) "to resolve our common problems."

"While the next five years may bring more challenges, we stand here today with the knowledge that we are prepared for whatever may come. We will face the eye of these storms and will not relent in our efforts to overcome them. I do not expect them to be easy but there is optimism," he said.

He also said that to some extent, the CNMI's future rests in the hands of the U.S. federal government.

Fitial said that federal funding, federal policies, and the U.S. military buildup in the region will also play a large part in determining the CNMI's economic future.

Tony Babauta, the Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs at the U.S. Department of the Interior, noted the governor's recognition of the challenges faced by the CNMI, and his efforts at providing direction and leadership to address those.

Babauta said he always looks forward to working with the governors of all U.S. territories, including Fitial.

Sablan, for his part, said Fitial's statement of cooperating with the federal government is "good."

"And I will continue to work with him to ensure we bring prosperity to our Commonwealth and improve our economy. In the next five years, there's hope for the CNMI. I do not want to disagree with anyone who wants the CNMI to improve," he said in an interview right after the inauguration.

The federal government took over CNMI immigration on Nov. 28, 2009 due to Public Law 110-229, the same law signed in May 2008 that gave the CNMI its first elected non-voting delegate to the U.S. Congress.

Fitial said the CNMI cannot prosper with constricted access to foreign capital and labor, and the CNMI will surely suffer with no access to foreign labor after five years.

Ceremonies

Bishop Tomas A. Camacho of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa offered the invocation, followed by the presentation of colors by the Marianas High School JROTC and the singing of the U.S. and CNMI National Anthems. Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio served as master of ceremony.

CNMI Superior Court Associate Judge Perry Inos officiated the swearing in of the lieutenant governor, with his daughter holding the Bible.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and first lady Josie Fitial walk hand in hand down the red carpet for the inauguration ceremony held yesterday at the Saipan World Resort.

CNMI Supreme Court Associate Justice Alexandro Castro noted the importance of taking an oath of office before he swore in Fitial. First lady Josie Fitial held the microphone for her husband, and their daughter Christine held the Bible.

Fitial took to the podium at 3:55pm, and recognized his family and dignitaries.

He asked for a moment of silence to honor Micronesian sons and daughters currently serving in the nation's armed forces, as well as fallen soldiers.

Fitial began reading his prepared four-page inaugural speech at 3:59pm, and wrapped it up at 4:14pm.

'Honored, humbled'

Fitial was first elected into office in 2005 and took his oath of office in January 2006.

With Inos as his new lieutenant governor, he sought re-election in the November 2009 general polls and finished second in a four-way gubernatorial race. However, because none of the candidates received at least 50 percent plus one of the votes cast and counted, the first CNMI gubernatorial runoff election had to be held.

In the final tally, Fitial and Inos won by 370 votes over former Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider and former House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios of the Republican Party.

In his address, Fitial, the founder of the Covenant Party, said he is "honored" by the peoples' vote of confidence "during one of the most trying periods in our short history as a self-governing Commonwealth of the United States."

"In the face of all of these unprecedented crises and challenges, I am very humbled to be the first CNMI governor to win re-election in some 25 years, since 1985, when former governor Pedro P. Tenorio won re-election during a period of great economic growth and development for our islands," he said.

Tenorio, along with his wife Sophie, was among those who attended the ceremony, along with at least two of the CNMI's former governors—Juan N. Babauta and Froilan Tenorio, who is now the newly installed speaker of the 17th House of Representatives.

'We need your support'

Fitial and Inos will also be the first ones, and probably the only governor and lieutenant governor in CNMI history, to serve a five-year term due to a ratified initiative requiring general elections to be held only on even-numbered years.

The governor said to meet the challenges and capitalize on opportunities in the next five years, he and Inos "will need a united community, not a divided government."

"I cannot possibly overemphasize the vital importance of maintaining community unity during turbulent times of economic disruptions," he said, referring to the support needed from the private business sector, the 17th Legislature, the CNMI's delegate to Congress, partners in the Pacific Region, "and, most of all, we need the support and the understanding of the federal government."

He also urged everyone living in the Commonwealth to fully support the efforts of the U.S. Census Bureau "to make the CNMI count, to make sure the CNMI is properly counted and not neglected."

"This will help us ensure that we receive the appropriate federal funding. It is absolutely crucial for the federal government to have accurate information about our Commonwealth, from which to base sound federal policy and federal funding," he added.

Among the Micronesian leaders, federal officials and dignitaries who attended the inauguration were Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho and first lady Joann Camacho, Palau President Johnson Toribiong, Federated States of Micronesia Vice President Alik Alik, FSM Consul General Jackson Gerson, Guam Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert J. Torres, former Guam Gov. Paul Calvo, Rear Admiral Douglass T. Biesel, Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs at the Interior Tony M. Babauta, and Office of Insular Affairs Director Nik Pula.

Following the inauguration was an invitation-only, black tie VIP Ball at 6pm, also at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe. At the same time, a suit-and-tie People's Ball was held at the Fiesta Resort in Garapan.

New BOE calls for 'equality' among public schools

Blanco-Maratita re-elected board chair

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The new composition of the 12TH CNMI State Board of Education has set for itself the main goal of bringing "equality" to all public school students on three islands—Saipan, Rota, and Tinian.

Supreme Court Associate Justice Alexandro C. Castro administered yesterday the oath of office for newly elected board members Lucy Blanco-Maratita and Herman Guerrero in the presence of their families, colleagues, and public school personnel.

Blanco-Maratita, by acclamation, was also re-elected to the chairmanship of the state board, along with new vice chair Marylou Ada, and treasurer Tanya King.

Blanco-Maratita described the "equality" issue as one of the biggest priorities of the new board to ensure that "no child is left behind" in the Commonwealth.

As representative of Tinian, Blanco-Maratita disclosed that she has yet to see that goal being accomplished for both Rota and Tinian students, particularly at the high school level.

"Equality among schools is one of the biggest priorities of the board. It is important that all our students, especially high school students, have access to all opportunities that are available to them. This is my concern because in realizing and looking in the past years, we are still not at that place where we need to be—that students on Tinian and Rota have access to the same opportunities on Saipan," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

She cited among these programs the career technical education classes that also need to be offered on both islands. In order to address this concern, she said the board would do its best to develop and expand the system's technology program to take advantage of video teleconference sessions.

"We also need to think outside of the school boundaries or island boundaries by coming out with a strong policy of long-distance learning [through VTC]," she said.

By doing this, online and VTC classes can be offered simultaneously to all high school students on three islands, she added.

A compensation package for teachers who are handling "virtual classrooms" is also an area the board will tackle, according to Blanco-Maratita.

Because PSS receives millions in ARRA funds, Blanco-Maratita stressed the importance of complying with the requirements set by the federal government.

"In line with ARRA, we have to make sure that the funding is spent in the manner that is supposedly to be spent and that it advances student achievement," she said.

This year, a total of $45 million in ARRA funds were approved for PSS: $32.3 million from the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund; $9.2 million in consolidated grants from USDOE; and $3.6 million from the consolidated ARRA fund.

'2010: Good year for PSS, BOE'

Newly elected vice chair Marylou Ada said the new board will continue with the priority goals initiated last year. These include pushing all schools to meet quality standard, improving student achievements, assisting teachers to meet the highly qualified mandate, completing the repairs and renovation of all schools, improving curriculums, and expanding meal and after-school programs.

At present, 71percent of PSS teachers are considered HQTs.

Ada expressed optimism about the performance of schools and the board in 2010.

"We're very optimistic about the future. I think we have a good team and we work very well. We are all on the same page and we always put students first. We have our disagreements but eventually, it's always for students first and trying to achieve everything," Ada added.

Board policies, regs

Another re-elected member, Herman T. Guerrero, cited the need to revisit all board policies and regulations to better improve the system's operation.

"We're in the process of reviewing current policies and we're upgrading them. We need to look at other ways to improve our operation or alternative ways to effectively manage the school system," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Guerrero, who is the chairman of the board's fiscal and personnel committee, indicated that, although PSS stands to receive a significant amount of ARRA funds, its operation might still be hampered due to the lack of funding support from the local government.

He hopes that the governor's submission of $38 million for FY 2010 will be passed by the incoming Legislature.

PSS has over 11,000 students in its 20 public schools. It has over a thousand employees, including support staff being paid under local appropriation. Every year, an estimated $4 million is being spent for utility consumption. It also has over $14 million in unfunded liability to the Retirement Fund.

"Funding is still a challenge for us. So we're hoping the incoming legislature will act on the PSS budget based on the governor's submission of $38 million," he said.

Norman honored

The new board also honored long-time member Scott Norman for his 10-year service to the board. Norman is the private school representative to the board whose term expired in October.

Yesterday, Norman expressed his gratitude to his colleagues in recognizing his contributions.

Blanco-Maratita informed *Saipan Tribune* that the board had already notified Gov. Benigno R. Fitial about the vacancy. At present, two positions on the board have yet to be filled, including the teacher representative for PSS and private schools.

MONETH G. DEPOSA

Members of the 12th CNMI State Board of Education pose after the swearing-in rites at the board conference room yesterday. Two members were re-elected to the position. From left are Associate Judge Alexandro Castro, Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Tanya King, re-elected chair Lucy Blanco-Maratita, vice chair Marylou Ada, Herman T. Guerrero, and former private school representative Scott Norman.

COE *firm on 'no extension' rule for* HQT *deadline*

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan disclosed yesterday that the Board of Education is not contemplating asking for another extension in the deadline set by the U.S. Department of Education for the CNMI Public School System to have all its teachers certified as highly qualified.

The CNMI has until July 31, 2011, to comply with the HQT mandate of the No Child Left Behind Act. After this date, all schools will be barred from hiring non-HQT personnel or those who fail to meet three requirements: a college degree, teaching certificates, and Praxis tests.

"Let me say this: the Board of Education is very firm on its policy on highly qualified teachers, highly qualified counselors, and highly qualified administrators. My role as commissioner is to ensure that I implement those policies. Until the board makes any other decision, I am here to continue to enforce what has been passed. And for now, the board is not making any change in that decision," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

Of the 564 classroom teachers at PSS, 71 percent or 399 teachers are already HQT. The rest are either awaiting the results of their tests or have yet to complete all certifications.

Besides allocating over $3 million for its yearly professional development and institutes, the BOE has also adopted compensation plans for teachers, counselors and principals to motivate them to meet the standards.

Sablan admitted yesterday that PSS has yet to come up with a plan on what it will do with its non-HQTs come 2011, adding that PSS no concrete plans at this time if these teachers will be retained in the system even as instructors or teacher aides.

According to re-elected board chair Lucy Blanco-Maratita, the schools cannot go "backwards" in terms of meeting HQT requirements.

"We can't really go backwards on that. Before we look into the deadline extension, we have to do more, that's why I call on these teachers to meet those goals," she said.

Blanco-Maratita pointed out that BOE is convinced that the success of student learning and quality of education in classrooms is tied to the credentials and the way teachers are doing their jobs.

Sablan said she is very pleased with the message of support given by each board member during the inauguration rites yesterday.

"They expressed a strong interest to continue to support the priorities, goals and mission of PSS…and I look forward to continue working with them to advance public education in the CNMI," she said.

In advancing public education, Sablan said this includes a rigorous curriculum that is also relevant to what is expected in the CNMI; strong relationship not just with the board but also with teachers, parents, students and community members.

By reviewing existing policies and regulations, the commissioner said the effort will surely result in a more relevant, meaningful, and manageable operation of all public schools.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

KIM CHANG SOOK and KIM JAE WON, Plaintiffs, -v- NOBUYUKI KUROSAWA AND AIOI INSURANCE COMPANY, LTD., Defendants.) CIVIL ACTION NO. 08-0473

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT, NOBUYUKI KUROSAWA:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is served upon you hereby, within twenty-one (21) days after the fourth publication of this Summons, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LCC, the Plaintiffs Attorneys, whose address is P.O. Box 5222, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared a signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to apear personally until further notice. If you fail to answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

By order of the above court:

/S/ Deputy Clerk of Court

DATED, this 11th day of December, 2009.

17th House speaker: FY 2010 budget bill in 30 days

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Members of the 17th House of Representatives led by House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan), seated center, pose with Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, seated left, and Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos, seated right, after the swearing in ceremony held on Capital Hill yesterday.

Newly sworn in House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) vowed to pass a balanced Fiscal Year 2010 budget bill in 30 days starting yesterday, which marked the inaugural session of the 17th House of Representatives on Capital Hill.

Unlike their predecessors and successors, the members of the 17th House of Representatives will serve a three-year term instead of the regular two years—the result of a legislative initiative ratified in the Nov. 7 general elections requiring the holding of general elections only on even-numbered years.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan administered the oath of office for the 20 members of the House before a large crowd of dignitaries that included Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho and first lady Joann Camacho, Palau President Johnson Toribiong, Office of Insular Affairs Director Nik Pula, Cabinet officials, and former lawmakers.

The House consists of 20 members, but right before the election of officers at 10:46am, re-elected Rep. Ramon "Ray" Tebuteb (R-Saipan) asked to be excused from the rest of the session to attend to a "family emergency."

Tenorio, who served as the fourth elected CNMI governor from 1994 to 1998, initially abstained from voting for himself as speaker.

The initial voting record was 18-0, with one abstention from Tenorio, and one excused absence, which was Tebuteb.

Re-elected Rep. Diego T. Benavente (R-Saipan), right after the voting, said "it's rather odd" that Tenorio didn't vote for himself as speaker.

Speaker pro tem Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan) asked Tenorio: "Will you cast your vote please?" Tenorio responded "yes," and the crowd applauded. The voting record was thus 19-0.

Since the start of the organizational session shortly after 10am, Torres stole the show when, as soon as he assumed the seat as speaker pro tem, said he will overrule any objection to his temporary role.

Before passing on the gavel to Tenorio, Torres asked the speaker for a short acceptance speech to which Tenorio obliged by thanking his colleagues for electing him.

Also elected on a 19-0 vote each were Rep. Felicidad T. Ogumuro (Cov-Saipan) as vice speaker and Rep. George N. Camacho (Ind-Saipan) as floor leader, a post previously held by his brother, Joseph N. Camacho.

Benavente also announced during the session that the Republicans held a caucus and elected him as minority leader for the 17th House. Benavente is a former lieutenant governor.

Nine of the 20-member House are Republicans, while seven are from the ruling Covenant Party. The four independents have aligned themselves with the Covenant, making them the majority in the House.

Tenorio gave each of the members a few minutes for their statements. The members thanked their families, supporters, colleagues and voters, and vowed to work for the betterment of the people of the CNMUI.

The speaker, upon his turn to deliver his remarks, thanked his colleagues for the "great honor" of electing him as House speaker. He said he takes his responsibility "very seriously," adding that the House will conduct its business in a way "never seen before."

"Today is Day 1. We will use these days to conduct people's business," he said.

Tenorio said he disagrees with the attorney general that a recently ratified legislative initiative requiring the timely passing of a balanced budget does not apply in the current fiscal year.

He said in the next 30 days, the House will pass a balanced budget bill, adding that the CNMI will also have its FY 2011 budget before Sept. 31, 2010, which is the end of FY 2010.

The 17th House, he added, is a "new era of fiscal responsibility."

"I intend to be the speaker of the entire House, not only of the majority. I extend cooperation with the minority," he said.

The election of officers during the organization session was only for formality's sake. Elected Covenant Party members and the four independents elected the officers on Nov. 27. The House leadership also named the committee chairmanships that same day.

In yesterday's House session, Fr. Jesse Reyes led the invocation, while Claire D. Sablan served as mistress of ceremony. The Marianas High School JROTC Color Guard presented the colors.

Manglona sets three goals to rebuild Commonwealth

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Members of the 17th Senate have their picture taken after taking their oath of office yesterday on Capital Hill.

Members of the 17th Senate took their oath of office yesterday, pledging to work together and setting goals to address the struggling economy and rebuild the Commonwealth.

Rota Sen. Paul A. Manglona, who was elected Senate president, vowed to resolve during his term three goals: stabilization of the Retirement Fund, to have a functional and responsive public health system, and develop a workable plan for utility and land use needs.

Superior Court presiding judge Robert Naraja administered the oath of office for the senators.

Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos and Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Insular Areas Anthony M. Babauta were among the guests at the inauguration.

The senators elected Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) as Senate vice president, former Senate president Pete P. Reyes (R-Saipan) is now the new floor leader, while Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota), the lone female senator, is the Senate legislative secretary.

Manglona also named yesterday the chairpersons of various Senate committees:

- Hofschneider, Rules and Procedure Committee;
- Reyes, Federal Relations and Independent Agencies Committee;
- Taimanao, Fiscal Affairs Committee;
- Sen. Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian), Executive Appointments and Government Investigations Committee;
- Sen. Ralph DLG. Torres (R-Saipan), Resources, Economic Development and Programs Committee and Health and Welfare Committee;
- Sen. Juan M. Ayuyu (Ind-Rota), Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications Committee;
- Sen. Luis Crisostimo (D-Saipan), Judiciary, Government, and Law Committee; and
- Sen. Henry San Nicolas (Cov-Tinian), Committee on Youth.

Of the nine senators, four are new: Ayuyu, Taimanao, Cruz, and Torres.

Before adjourning yesterday's session, Manglona allowed each senators to speak. Since it was already past noon when the senators completed their speeches, Manglona said he will just forego his written speech and that he will just put it in the journal. He then made a brief speech in Chamorro.

In his prepared speech, Manglona vowed to resolve three goals during the 17th Legislature.

To stabilize the Retirement Fund, he said the Senate will come up with a practical and pragmatic plan to ensure the solvency of the Fund.

The other goal, he said, is to transition the public health system into a functional and responsive unit.

The third goal, Manglona said, is to have along-term and workable plan for the utility and land use needs.

"Essential to accomplishing these goals will be the passage of a timely and balanced government operational budget," he said.

Manglona expressed optimism that with the concerted and collaborative efforts of local leaders, combined with the public's continued perseverance and support, "the CNMI will prevail in addressing and overcoming the daunting task we currently face."

"As an optimist, I firmly believe that difficult times should be viewed as a prerequisite to success. As such, let us accept these challenges now and move forward in unison with our shared commitment and goal of improving the lives of everyone who calls the CNMI home," Manglona said.

Reyes said the 15th and 16th Legislatures were very memorable to him because he and his colleagues were like one family.

Reyes welcomed the new senators whom he believes will bring fresh ideas.

Reyes urged all senators to put aside any political differences to have a unified Legislature.

"I will do my best so you can make your terms in the Senate memorable and productive," he added.

New Saipan mayor sets 12 goals for his administration

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Mayor Donald Pangelinan Flores, surrounded by family members, takes his oath of office as administered by Judge Robert C. Naraja during the inauguration ceremony held yesterday at the parking lot of the Saipan Mayor's Office in San Antonio.
MONETH DEPOSA

Saipan Mayor Donald Pangelinan Flores formally took office yesterday during the inauguration ceremony held at the parking lot of the Saipan Mayor's Office in San Antonio that was witnessed by hundreds of community members and supporters.

Flores, the Republican Party candidate who emerged victorious in the Nov. 7 mayoralty race, outlined 12 priorities for his administration.

Topping the new mayor's list is the timely processing of all applications for the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance, SHEFA, and increasing the $3 million scholarship funding by tapping the assistance of the Legislature.

SHEFA is a scholarship program ran by a board appointed by the mayor of Saipan.

"I will task the board to ensure that all applications for scholarships are processed in a timely manner and decisions made in the shortest possible time. I will work with the Legislature to identify new sources of revenue to increase funding level of the program," Flores said.

Because Saipan has over 30 villages and each is as diverse as the other in terms of needs, population and size, Flores believes that the needs of each village will best be addressed if each one has a representative to coordinate their concerns with his office.

He also intends to address concerns on littering, junk cars, scrap metals and unsightly debris.

"I will aggressively pursue a program that will link all permitting agencies to better coordination and service. I believe that the mayor's office is the right base in our community to oversee the coordination of the enforcement of various laws and regulations pertaining to the environment," he added.

To better promote the island as a prime tourist destination and encourage travelers to return to the island, Flores said there's a need to enhance and preserve the history, culture, and important historical sites on island.

Flores described this objective as both "realistic and attainable" and vowed to partner with private landowners to be involved in the promotion.

The lack of a sports program for children in the villages as well as the building of social halls or community centers for the youth were also identified as major concerns that Flores said he will seriously consider.

The new mayor also outlined a plan to make the Chamolinian Village be operated and maintained by local children and elders where art demonstrations will be showcased.

"It's my vision to make the Chamolinian Village be community-owned," he said.

A partnership with the Department of Public Works' Roads and Grounds Maintenance Division to keep roads safe, clean, and free of unwanted vegetation was also identified among his priorities.

Because trash disposal seems to be a problem in many villages, Flores cited that big containers for trash will be located at designated trash collection centers to help reduce the dumping of trash and other debris along public roads and unauthorized places.

"Providing low cost convenience for our residents is not only doable, but achievable with the right combination of planning, control, and outreach. We will work closely with the private sector on this," he said.

The new mayor also vowed to improve school bus stops for the safety of children by offering "ownership" of these shelters to community members. This way, he believes, ugly graffiti and destructive vandalism can be drastically eliminated.

Finally, Flores said he is committed to resolving the stray animals problem, which not only poses a health risk but threatens the Commonwealth economy by chasing away tourists.

"Getting this statutory responsibility off the ground and moving along is my top priority. I say enough is enough. Desired funding may not be readily available [but] this is not excuse to just sit and do nothing. The problem is real and it affects all of us," he said.

Flanked by family members, Flores took his oath of office, as administered by presiding judge Robert C. Naraja yesterday. Among the guests in the inauguration ceremony were CNMI Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan, former Saipan mayor Juan B. Tudela, Youth Congress Speaker Alana May Leon Guerrero, Tinian mayor-elect Francisco Cruz, and senators and congressmen from various districts.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
PSS RFP 10-001

"AUDIT OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM FOR FISCAL YEARS 2010, 2011 AND 2012"

The CNMI Public School System (PSS) is required by law to have an external audit every fiscal year. This audit is subject to the requirements of the Single Audit Act. The Public Auditor is ultimately responsible for the conduct of external audits pursuant to Public Law 3-91. PSS is an autonomous government agency, and its audit is independent of any audit of the CNMI government.

The Public School System and the Office of the Public Auditor are soliciting competitive sealed proposals from certified public accounting (CPA) firms to conduct single audits for fiscal years 2010, 2011, and 2012. Beginning January 12, 2010 the single audit proposal package may be obtained from the PSS Procurement & Supply Office situated on the 3rd floor of the CNMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All Proposals, an original and five copies, shall be sealed in an envelope marked "PSS RFP 09-043 Audit of the Public School System" and submitted to the PSS Procurement & Supply Office in the CNM Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than 10 AM February 4, 2010. Any proposal received after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Questions pertaining to this RFP may be directed to Ms. Lori A. Grizzard, Acting Director of Finance at 237.3045, or faxed to 664.3750, not later than January 29, 2010.

/s/ Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

/s/ Robert Florian
P&S Officer

/s/ Michael Pai, CPA
Public Auditor

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-10-012

The Office of the Executive Director! Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, is soliciting sealed bids for the construction of **SAIPAN WELL ISOLATION PROJECT**, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A non-refundable payment of **$350.00** is required for each set of Plans, Specifications, and Proposal Forms, available on or after **January 11, 2010** at the Water Division Office, CUC, Saipan. A pre-bid Conference for this project is scheduled at **9:00 a.m.**, on **January 15, 2010**, at the CUC Conference Room, Saipan. A project site visit is scheduled following the pre-bid meeting.

One (1) original and five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-10-012 Construction of Saipan Well Isolation Project"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor Joeten Dandan Commercial Building P.O . Box 501220, Saipan! MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM local time (CST), Wednesday, January 27, 2010**, at which time they will be publicly open and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A bid guarantee of 15 percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury. A performance and payment bond of hundred (100%) percent each of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. Surety companies must hold a certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety for proposal security. The Contractor will be required to submit payment and performance bonds from a U.S. Treasury listed company. No advance payment will be authorized on the project or an Irrevocable Letter of Credit (100% aggregate contract cost/CUC Beneficiary) or a payment bond. All insurers questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI1s Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). A Clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI1s Insurance Code.

The bidder is required to submit a copy of his CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less that the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page - http://www.dol.gov/esa/minwage/cnmi/cnmi.htm. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. The contractor will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws including the **Davis Bacon Act.**

This project is funded though a grant from the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)** under the **AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA)**. Award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval from the USEPA.

This project involves the installation of transmission lines to connect direct feed wells from the different villages into water tank storages to meet all federal safe water standards and requirements.

The proposed project will also include the construction of new transmission lines to connect 3 new wells in the Kagman area. For Kagman well field, the work will include control panel enclosure buildings, controls, perimeter security fencing, exterior perimeter slabs, installation of pumps, construction of properly designed wellheads and connecting the wells in to the existing transmission line.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the interest of the government.

All technical inquiries should be directed to Capt. Robert Lorenz at telephone number (670) 235-7025 Ext. 148 or Mr. Larry T. Manacop at telephone number (670) 235-7025 Ext. 150 and inquiries regarding procurement should be directed to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr. Procurement & Supply Manager at (670) 235-7025 Ext. 134.

/s/ ABE UTU MALAE
Assistant Executive Director for Operation

/s/ ANTONIO S. MUNA
Executive Director

HEALTHY LUNCH CAMPAIGN

Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan presents a check in the amount of $349 to the CHC Volunteers as donation. The money was collected in December from the Healthy Lunch $1 drive. This is a continuation of Fiesta's effort to help the CHC Volunteers raise the amount it needs to purchase one hyberbaric chamber to be used at the Commonwealth Health Center. The drive began in September 2009.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

'Where do we go from here?'

Committee announces MLK Day poster contest

Monday, Jan. 18, 2010, marks the fourth official commemoration of Martin Luther King Day since Gov. Benigno R. Fitial signed the bill enacting Martin Luther King Jr. Day as an official CNMI holiday.

This year, the African American Cultural Preservation Committee on Saipan is hosting its first MLK Day Poster Contest.

The poster contest continues the tradition of student awareness, and participation in the annual commemoration activities started with previous years' popular essay contests.

This year's theme is "Where do we go from here?," the name of King's famous 1967 speech, and is meant to make students aware that every moment in life offers the opportunity to make new choices, and that they have the ability and responsibility to choose how to live their lives to determine where they go in life.

New years, new administrations, new terms in office, new school semesters, and every new day—all represent ideal opportunities to decide "where do we go from here?" as a nation, as a community, and as an individual.

Student artists are asked to draw/paint/create their concepts of what those choices are, and/or how they affect the nation, the community, and/or the individual. Creativity, uniqueness and outside-the-box thinking is encouraged, and entries should include some reference to Martin Luther King Jr., his vision, speeches, concept of non-violence, civil rights, etc. All posters will be displayed at the American Memorial Park Visitors Center from the date of receipt through Monday, Jan 18, 2010, and winners will be announced at the MLK Day event at the American Memorial Park on Jan. 18, 2010. ***(PR)***

CONTEST INFO

CATEGORIES:
K - 2nd Grades
3rd - 5th grades
6th -12th grades
All private and public schools

GUIDELINES:
Minimum size: 9" x 12"
Maximum size: 12" x 18"
Medium: ANY (Paint, charcoal, ink, computer, etc.)
All artwork must be original, and no tracing is allowed.

DEADLINE and SUBMISSION PROCESS:
Submit posters on or before Saturday, Jan. 16, 2010 at Joe Hill Law Offices behind Shirley's in Susupe on Tokcha Ave. See or contact Alma or Lily at 234-7743, Joe Hill at 234-6806 or joe.hill@saipan.com, Walt Goodridge at walt@saipanliving.com.

Details may be found on BlacksOnSaipan.com, by contacting AACPC president, Joe Hill at 670 234-6806 or emailing mlkcontest@blacksonsaipan.com.

The African American Cultural Preservation Committee on Saipan wishes to thank all past and present supporters of our MLK Day events including Hyatt Regency Saipan, Joeten Enterprises, Empty Vessel Ministry, American Memorial Park, and the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities.

Can you identify

THE NMI Council for the Humanities, in collaboration with the *Saipan Tribune*, is running a series of photographs in this section every Tuesday and is inviting the public to identify the persons or places featured in this section.

If you can identify the persons or places in the picture, please contact the NMI Council for the Humanities by telephone (235-4785), via email (photo@nmihumanities.org) or by visiting the Council's office located in Springs Plaza, Gualo Rai. These images are from the Council's Historic Photograph Database which is currently being developed to help document the history and cultures of the CNMI.

The persons featured in last week's photo have been identified as Herminio "Jerry" Olopumar, left, and Gregorio Lughuw (from Satawal) during the Crown of Thorns starfish eradication project circa 1970. Identified by Leo Kani, John Flores, Juan Tenorio, and Lino Olopai.

EMO warns of high surf, rip currents

The CNMI Emergency Management Office issued high surf and small craft advisories yesterday, warning of a large north swell that will produce hazardous surf and a high risk of rip currents on north facing reefs.

The high surf advisory was in effect until 6pm last night while the small craft advisory was in effect up to 6am this morning.

EMO said that hazardous surf of 7 to 9 feet was expected on north facing reefs and beaches yesterday, producing dangerous rip currents.

"Seas 10 feet or greater and sustained winds of 20 knots with frequent gusts to 30 knots are expected to produce conditions hazardous to small craft," it said.

Based on information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, there will be an east swell of 7 feet and north of 4 to 5 feet today until this evening.

Tomorrow, Wednesday, east wind is projected at 15 knots, with wind waves of 2 ft or less and an east swell of 7 ft and north 3 ft.

EMO is strongly advising the public to avoid venturing near exposed reefs and beaches, especially those facing north as rip currents will be life threatening. Inexperienced mariners, especially those operating smaller vessels, should avoid navigating in these conditions. If boating is necessary, exercise caution when entering or leaving harbors and inlets and near reef lines. ***(EMO)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 12, 1999

Local labor pool urged

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday prodded the business community to start developing a local labor pool to lessen CNMI's dependence on foreign workers amid plans of the Legislature to lift the indefinite freeze on hiring of guest employees. Although the governor underscored the need to employ foreign workers in the Northern Marianas for certain categories, he said the private sector should train local residents to take on the jobs that will be left by alien workers. "I think it's about time that we train our own people," Tenorio said in an interview, "I would like to see the business community started training our local people and take care of some of the jobs."

Support for scrapping of $100K deposit builds

Senate Floor leader Pete P. Reyes yesterday expressed support on the easing of a cash deposit requirement imposed on foreign investments, adding to growing clamor for a legislation to amend the stringent law in light of the current economic slump. He also shrugged off fear that the removal of the $100,000 security bond may encourage businessmen to set up what he called "shadow investments" and violate CNMI laws. "We need to see this proposed bill move forward, it's beginning to hound us," Reyes said in an interview, referring to House Bill 11-131 which is pending at the Senate.

Jan. 12, 2000

Coalition prevails in House

As expected, the new coalition of Republicans, Democrats and Independents took control of the House of Representatives during the highly-charged inaugural session yesterday packed with hundreds of families, relatives, friends and supporters of the 18-seat chamber. The coalition, composed of 10 members led by former Speaker Benigno R. Fitial, elected the political veteran to a new two-year term to the House's top post, along with Rota Rep. Alejo M. Mendiola as Vice Speaker and Rep. Oscar M. Babauta as Majority Floor Leader. Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider's bid for the speakership ended in crushing defeat with just eight votes from fellow GOP partymates, so was Representatives Diego T. Benavente's nomination as vice speaker and Jesus T. Attao's aim for the third ranking position in the lower house.

Fitial outlines economic agenda

Newly elected House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial laid down four major policies he likened to the four pillars of the traditional taga stone during his speech yesterday at the inaugural session of the 12th Legislature. Under the new coalition he formed with Republicans, Democrats and Independents at the House of Representatives, he vowed to pursue better economic opportunities for the CNMI people, educational investments, environmental protection and preservation of island way of life. He also pledged to work with "friends" in Washington sympathetic to the conditions in the Commonwealth to ensure that the island government keeps control of local immigration, minimum wage and custom standards.

Jan. 12, 2001

Scam perpetrators' guise behind remittance center

Perpetrators of a savings scam who ran away with thousands of dollars gypped from Chinese garment factory workers were able to get the trust of their victims after hiding behind a remittance license obtained from the Department of Commerce. Winfield Corporation obtained its license to do remittance job middle of last year and started accepting transactions exclusively from Chinese workers in the third quarter of 2000, records from the commerce department disclosed. Based on the report submitted by Winfield Corporation to the Banking and Insurance Division, remittance transactions entered into the company by Chinese workers reached $346,505 in the third quarter of last year.

Teno to attend Bush's inauguration

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio will be one among the thousands of U.S. officials, foreign dignitaries and other invited guests witnessing the swearing in of President-elect George W. Bush next week in Washington D.C. He is scheduled to depart for the nation's capital on January 17 to attend the inaugural ceremonies next Saturday. The governor, who has received an invitation, did not say who will accompany him to the trip, although a delegation from CNMI is expected to travel with him. It is unlikely, however, to arrange a meeting with Mr. Bush or any of his Cabinet officials, Mr. Tenorio acknowledged, since they expect him and the others to be busy during this time.

CNMI public invited to hearings on Guam buildup

The CNMI Military Integration Management Committee is encouraging the public to participate in the upcoming Joint Guam Program Office public hearings that are scheduled for Tinian on Thursday, Jan. 14, 2010, and Saipan on Friday, Jan. 15, 2010.

The MIMC Coordinator, Tom Linden, will be on hand at both of these public hearings to answer any questions in regards to how the CNMI is dealing with the regional military buildup.

These meetings will be an introduction to the draft Environmental Impact Statement that has been prepared for both Guam and the CNMI.

While the CNMI government understands the complexity of the document that is to be commented on, the MIMC office encourages active participation.

In an effort to ensure that the community has an opportunity to fully digest the contents contained in the EIS, the MIMC, in partnership with Office of Economic Adjustment and the Guam Advisory Consulting Team, will be hosting a public forum on Jan. 27, 2010, at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

Representatives of the OEA and ACT will break down the 11,000 page EIS and be willing to answer any questions in regards to the military buildup in the region. The hearings will introduce the public to the EIS and allow them time to review and comment prior to the public forum, which will be held on Jan. 27.

The MIMC public forum will also be broadcast to both Tinian and Rota through a VTC provided by the Northern Marianas College and IT&E, and the MIMC and Department of Commerce will have representatives on Tinian and Rota to help answer any questions. The public is encouraged to submit questions ahead of time to the MIMC Coordinator by e-mailing them to cnmi.mimc@commerce.gov.mp.

The MIMC was created through a Charter in June 2009 to serve as the planning and policy making entity for all activities that relate to the expansion of military training and other defense transformation initiatives in the CNMI and Guam. The CNMI-MIMC is the official entity through which the CNMI will interface with the Department of the Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, JGPO, Department of Defense, and all other military representatives in regards to the military buildup. The policymaking committee is chaired by Gov. Benigno Fitial and consists of the Governor, Lt. Governor, Senate President, Speaker of the House, and the mayors of Rota, Tinian, Saipan, and the Northern Islands.

"Due to the overwhelming scope of this military relocation, the MIMC realizes that the path to success for our region will require a partnership with Guam and both Governor Fitial and Guam Gov. Felix Camacho have pledged their support of one another to ensure that the entire region benefits," said the committee in a statement. ***(PR)***

Hawaii can't afford a congressional election

HONOLULU (AP)—Cash-strapped Hawaii can't afford to pay for an election to replace a congressman who is planning to step down next month to run for governor, potentially leaving 600,000 urban Honolulu residents without representation in Washington.

Budget cuts have left the state Office of Elections with about $5,000 to last until July, with a special election costing nearly $1 million, interim Chief Elections Officer Scott Nago said.

Until the state finds money or this fall's regularly scheduled elections occur, one of Hawaii's two seats in the House of Representatives will remain vacant.

"Democracy depends on representation of the people," Jean Aoki, legislative liaison for the Hawaii chapter of the League of Women Voters. "I can't imagine the citizens of our state not wanting representation in the highest body in the land to make laws. It's just unthinkable."

Elections officials are hoping to hold a vote-by-mail special election May 1 if they can get the $925,000 it would cost. An election with walk-in voting would cost $1.2 million.

Whoever wins would become the favorite to take on the job permanently following November's general election.

U.S. Rep. Neil Abercrombie, a Democrat, announced last week he will resign Feb. 28 after 19 years so he can dedicate his time to the gubernatorial race. His two-year term was set to expire in January 2011.

His departure opens up the possibility that Hawaii's all-Democratic congressional delegation could be broken up for the first time since 1991.

Candidates for the winner-take-all special election include Democrats Ed Case, a former congressman, and state Senate President Colleen Hanabusa, as well as Honolulu City Councilman Charles Djou, a Republican.

The elections office faces a series of additional hurdles. It is considering consolidating nearly 30 percent of the state's 339 precincts next year with adjacent precincts, and it has to obtain new voting machines because of a ruling that the state overpaid on its prior contract.

"We're not where we want to be, but I don't see us not being able to catch up," Nago said.

Some state legislators have suggested saving money by delaying the special election until the regularly scheduled primary election in September. The idea of putting off the election for that long may run up against federal laws and the U.S. Constitution, Attorney General Mark Bennett said.

"I believe there would be a federal obligation to do it," Bennett told lawmakers last week. "They don't want the states to go without representation."

Others like Democratic state Sen. Donna Mercado Kim question whether the money might be better spent on education and social services, both of which have been slashed during the economic downturn.

"I haven't seen too many votes in the House that have been decided by a one-vote difference," said Kim, chairwoman of the Senate Ways and Means Committee. "Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying we should be without representation, but given everything that's going on, we have to prioritize."

Several recent bills in the House have won by a slim margin—most prominently, the Democratic-written health care bill that passed in November, 220-215.

Federal money may be available to help Hawaii pay for a special election.

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission hasn't issued an opinion on whether federal money could be used, but it may be allowed under a law passed to upgrade voting systems after the 2000 presidential election, said commission spokeswoman Sarah Litton.

Hawaii would have to ask the commission to decide whether the money can be spent in that way, Litton said.

Separately, about $1.3 million may be available because of a recently discovered accounting error. The money was distributed to Hawaii by the federal government in 2003 to reimburse the state for new voting machines, but it was put into the wrong account, elections officials said.

"I'm an optimist that we'll get through this. Maybe not as elegantly as some people would like, but we'll get through it," said state Elections Commission Chairman William Marston. "If you got any money, we'll take a contribution."

Authorities raid American Samoa immigration office

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa (AP)—Law enforcement agents in American Samoa have raided the U.S. territory's Office of Immigration seeking evidence of human trafficking in a case that could involve victims from China, the Philippines and South Korea, authorities said.

The agency is suspected of helping to illegally bring Asians into the South Pacific territory through neighboring Samoa, Lt. John Cendrowski of the Office of Territorial and International Criminal Intelligence and Drug Enforcement said in a search warrant that was executed Thursday.

It's possible that hundreds of victims were brought to American Samoa from May to Dec. 15, Cendrowski said. Many were women apparently being used by a prostitution ring that is plaguing the South Pacific, while the men found work in warehouses, restaurants and stores, he said.

One man from China who is now under protective care as a human trafficking victim told investigators he paid $20,000 to get to American Samoa via Samoa, Cendrowski said.

Upon arrival in Pago Pago, the victim didn't undergo immigration clearance. Instead, immigration officers waived him through and he was taken to the safe house and given a local immigration card, making him a legal resident of the territory, Cendrowski said in court documents.

The man also told officials he didn't take any tests or fill out any paperwork to obtain the documents provided to him.

"This is not the first time we had heard this type of story," Cendrowski said in the affidavit. "In our ongoing investigation into human trafficking, we have heard from different Asian races on how they were 'recruited' to come to American Samoa in order to earn a better living."

After arriving, they were ordered to pay additional fees for their plane trips, identification cards, driver's licenses and housing, he said.

"These fees would be taken out of their pay, if they were paid at all," Cendrowski said.

About 20 law enforcement officers, including one FBI agent, were involved in raids at the main immigration office in Utulei village and a smaller office at Pago Pago International Airport. They carted off large plastic bins and a cabinet filled with immigration documents.

No charges have been filed in the case, but any defendant could be prosecuted in territorial court.

The case could also go before federal court in Hawaii or Washington, D.C. if any defendant is alleged to have violated federal law. There is no federal court in American Samoa, which has a population of about 65,000.

State Secretary Clinton to visit Pacific

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—The United States Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, is to visit the Pacific this week.

Clinton will deliver a policy speech in Honolulu, Hawaii focused on Asia-Pacific multilateral engagement, and will be consulting with Pacific Command.

From Hawaii, she will travel to Papua New Guinea where she will hold bilateral meetings as well as meet with local civil society leaders to discuss environmental protection and women's empowerment.

On Jan. 15, Secretary Clinton will visit Auckland, where she will meet with senior New Zealand officials, including Prime Minister John Key.

She is also expected to hold talks with New Zealand citizens and meet with U.S. and New Zealand veterans.

Secretary Clinton will then travel to Australia to participate in the 25th Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations to discuss key global and regional security challenges.

Happy birthday greetings going out to Darren A. Gabrido, who is celebrating his 16th birthday today, Jan. 12, 2010. Much love coming from your parents, your older bro, Ken, your entire Salbahe family, and all your friends.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

Happy birthday to a wonderful father and grandfather, Michael White! You are a shining example of what "father" truly means. We are forever blessed and thankful for having you in our lives. Have an awesome day and don't work too hard! With lots of love always, you children and grandchildren.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

FAMILY GET-TOGETHER

Tony 'TJ' Sablan and family spend the evening at Tony Roma's with his brother Andrew, who will be returning to Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, in a few days.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

A barbaric proposal

The Anti-Homosexuality Bill of 2009 is an ugly and ignorant piece of legislation being considered in Uganda. If it is approved, the gay people of that nation would be subject to life in prison. This retreat from the death sentence originally proposed should neither be celebrated nor considered a concession by the government in response to pressure from the United States and other nations. The proposal is barbaric. That it is even being considered puts Uganda beyond the pale of civilized nations.

The nine-page bill, which says that "homosexual behavior and related practices" are a "threat to the traditional family," is an offense from beginning to end. The framers say it is needed to "protect" the country from those "seeking to impose their values of sexual promiscuity on the people of Uganda." They say the bill is also needed because children and youth "are made vulnerable to sexual abuse and deviation. ..." Among the corrupting influences are "uncensored technologies" and "increasing attempts by homosexuals to raise children. ..."

The law would apply to citizens or permanent residents of Uganda, and would cover behavior both in and outside that country. The measure would turn neighbor against neighbor by requiring those with knowledge of a gay person to report them to police within 24 hours or risk three years in prison. A seven-year jail term awaits the Ugandan who "aids, abets, (or) counsels" homosexuals. And anyone convicted of "aggravated homosexuality," which could mean someone who is HIV-positive and is intimate with another person of the same sex, could "suffer death."

The legislation talks about the "cherished culture" of Uganda and its "legal, religious, and traditional family values." We respect a nation's right to defend its culture and values. But sentencing men and women to life imprisonment because of their sexual orientation is an atrocity. Gays and lesbians would be punished by their own government for who they are. Contrary to the backward thinking of the Ugandan government, being gay is not a choice. But pushing homophobic laws that foment hate is.

The United States and other nations have urged officials to shelve the bill. So far, their entreaties have fallen on deaf ears. Perhaps at the Commonwealth Heads of Government summit opening Friday in Trinidad and Tobago, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, who will chair the gathering, can be persuaded to listen to the growing international outrage. If Uganda approves the anti-homosexuality bill, it risks making itself a pariah among nations.

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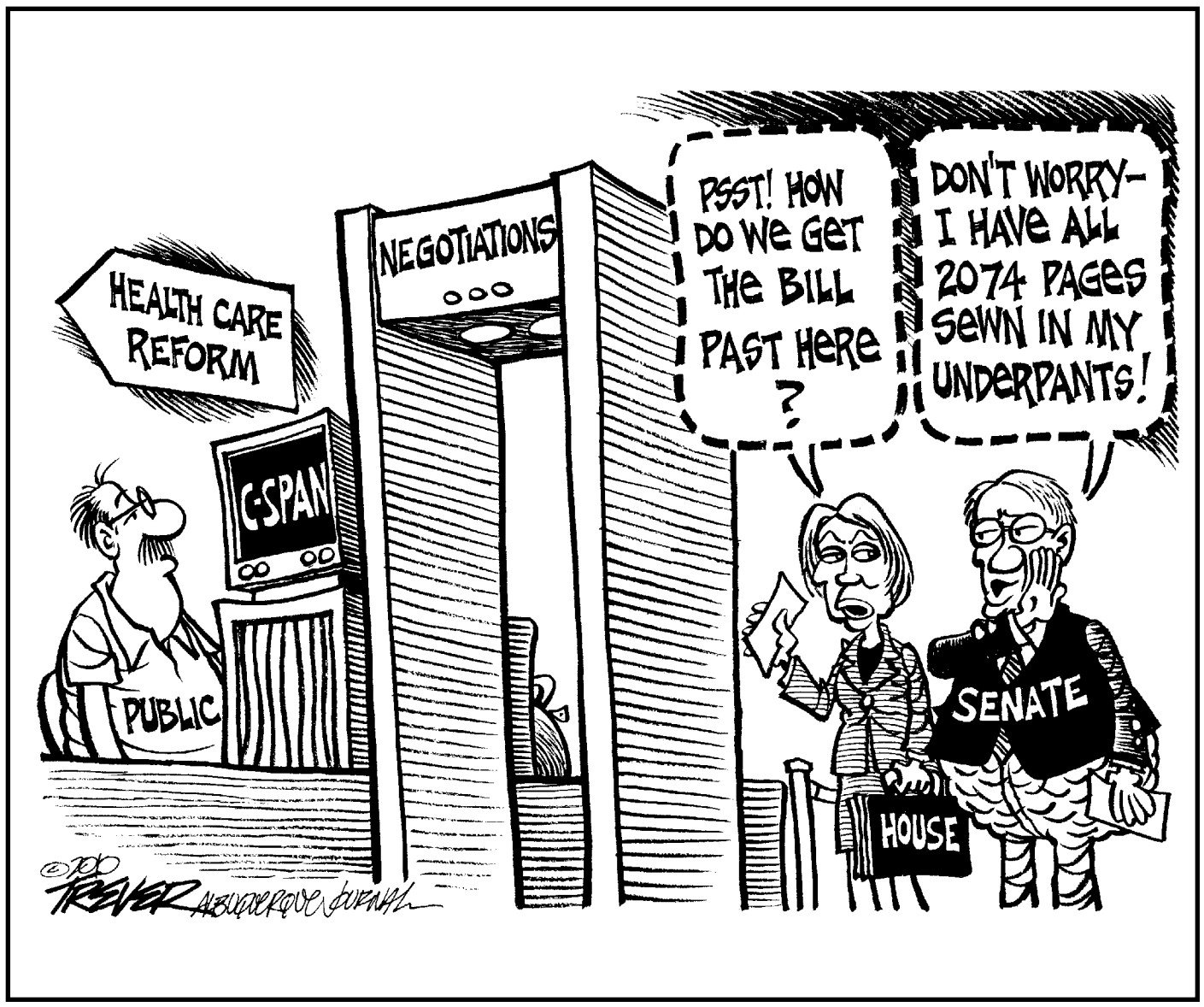


A moment in need of a movement

By HAROLD MEYERSON
Special to The Washington Post

Meyerson is editor-at-large of American Prospect *and the* L.A. Weekly.

Every Democratic president since Lyndon Johnson—Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama—has raised the hope that he would bring with him a new era of progressive reform. The legislative torrents of the New Deal and the Great Society—a few brief years in the 1930s and the '60s that fundamentally reshaped the nation's economy and society—are the templates that fire the liberal imagination.

Two great liberal historians—the Arthur Schlesingers, senior and junior—posited a cyclical theory of American political history, in which periods of progressive advance alternate with times of conservative reaction once every generation. And even when liberals have discounted this theory as too mechanistic, their hearts, if not their heads, have responded to the election of every Democratic president since LBJ—each of whom entered office with a substantial Democratic majority in Congress—with the hope that this time would be different, that a new burst of progressivism was at hand.

And each time, they have been disappointed. While Carter and Clinton could both point to progressive legislation enacted during their terms, many of their most significant achievements—the deregulation of transportation, the consolidation and deregulation of finance, the abolition of welfare, the enactment of trade agreements with low-wage nations—actually eroded the economic security that Franklin Roosevelt, Johnson and their congressional contemporaries had worked to hard to create.

Unlike Carter and Clinton, however, Obama took office at a moment when the intellectual force of laissez-faire economics was plainly spent. His reform agenda was nothing if not ambitious: health care for all, financial re-regulation, climate-change legislation and a Keynesian stimulus to revive a wounded economy. But as the first anniversary of his inauguration approaches, it's clear that despite the impending enactment of a genuinely epochal expansion of health care, a progressive era has not burst forth. Major legislation languishes or is watered down. Right-wing pseudo-populism stalks the land. The liberal base is demobilized. The '30s or the '60s it ain't.

The reasons for the stillbirth of the new progressive era are many and much discussed. There's the death of liberal and moderate Republicanism, the reluctance of some administration officials and congressional Democrats to challenge the banks, the ever-larger role of money in politics (see reluctance to challenge banks, above), the weakness of labor, the dysfunctionality of the Senate—the list is long and familiar. But if there's a common feature to the political landscapes in which Carter, Clinton and now Obama were compelled to work, it's the absence of a vibrant left movement.

The America over which FDR presided was home to mass organizations of the unemployed; farmers' groups that blocked foreclosures, sometimes at gunpoint; general strikes that shut down entire cities, and militant new unions that seized factories. Both communists and democratic socialists were enough of a presence in America to help shape these movements, generating so much street heat in so many congressional districts that Democrats were compelled to look leftward as they crafted their response to the Depression. During Lyndon Johnson's presidency, the civil rights movement, among whose leaders were such avowed democratic socialists as Martin Luther King Jr. and James Farmer, provided a new generation of street heat that both compelled and abetted the president and Congress to enact fundamental reforms.

In America, major liberal reforms require not just liberal governments, but autonomous, vibrant mass movements, usually led by activists who stand at or beyond liberalism's left fringe. No such movements were around during Carter and Clinton's presidencies. For his part, Obama won election with something new under the political sun: a list of 13 million people who had supported his campaign. But he has consistently declined to activate his activists to help him win legislative battles by pressuring, for instance, those Democratic members of Congress who have weakened or blocked his major bills. To be sure, loosing the activists would have brought problems of its own: Unlike Roosevelt or Johnson, who benefited from autonomous movements, Obama would be answerable for every loopy tactic his followers employed. But in the absence of both a free-standing movement and a legion of loyalists, Congress isn't feeling much pressure from the left to move Obama's agenda.

The construction of social movements is always a bit of a mystery. The right has had great success over the past year in building a movement that isn't really for anything but that has channeled anew the fears and loathings of millions of Americans. If Glenn Beck can help do that for the right, can't, say, Rachel Maddow and Keith Olbermann help build a movement against the banks or for jobs programs? It might well be too little too late, but without left pressure from below, the Obama presidency will end up looking more like Carter's or Clinton's than Roosevelt's or Johnson's.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Things we can't do anymore

IMMIGRATION FORUM

By MAYA KARA and BRUCE MAILMAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Maya Kara is a native of Hungary and comes to the practice of law by way of her interest in Asian history. Bruce Mailman is a native of Bakersfield, California and was a private investigator in California prior to becoming a lawyer. Both have lived and practiced law in the CNMI for over 20 years, Maya in government service and Bruce in private practice. They are married and are partners in the law firm of Mailman & Kara, LLC in Garapan, Saipan.

People are coming to us to ask for help with immigration and labor problems, to do things that were standard operating procedure before Nov. 28, but which can't be done anymore. These people know that the CNMI's immigration world turned upside down in November, but it's taking awhile to realize just how deeply the changes reached. Of course, immigration and labor changes began well before Nov. 28, and not just on the federal level. For example, Public Law 15-108, which became effective two years ago, wiped out the prior consensual transfer system for alien guest workers, but substituted a procedure through the Department of Labor's Hearing Office that was just as effective. In 2008, the CNMI adopted new immigration regulations, which clarified the existing CNMI entry permit categories and made many changes in requirements for the different categories. For example, the new regulations erased the "missionary" category—although we know that the Division of Immigration continued to renew missionary permits—and substituted "minister of religion" and "religious worker" categories, which is more in keeping with the federal visas for the same job categories.

P.L. 15-108 also got rid of the term "nonresident worker," substituting the more accurate designation of "foreign national worker." A welcome change: each of us has on too many occasions heard people use "nonresident worker" to mean "worker who doesn't really live here." Bruce once had a conversation in which someone curious about the CNMI asked how many people lived here. Another Saipan resident said, "About 25,000." Bruce said, "What about all the guest workers?" "Oh, they're nonresidents."

But we still hear "nonresident workers" used to mean our guest workers, and see it in print. The point is that although change may or may not be swift, adapting to it is slow. Today we will discuss some of the things we are being asked about that we can't do any more—and some that we can.

No New Umbrellas

That's right. No new umbrella permits. None. Even if they were approved and even printed, but not picked by the end of business on Nov. 27. DOL has determined that it cannot issue new permits, and "issuing" includes physically handing them over to the permittee. We have been consulted by a number of people, some of whom deliberately did not get umbrellas, for whatever reason, whose existing entry permits are expiring soon. We can help those who are qualified for a U.S. visa. For the others, we can only advise them not to overstay their lawful presence here. (Overstaying is bad, in terms of immigration consequences, and the longer the overstay the worse it gets. U.S. law bars overstayers from entering the U.S. for various numbers of years, depending on the length of the overstay; the bars are triggered once the overstay lasts six months, but we advise everyone not to accumulate any overstay time at all.)

No New Workers

No new workers can be admitted at this time except with a U.S. visa. The CW category, the U.S. visa that is likely to be most useful for workers in the CNMI is not yet available, and will not be available until USCIS issues its final CW1 regulations. This is likely to take 30 to 90 days. And even then we may not have new workers. Although the CNRA, the "federalization" statute, and the draft regulations themselves, indicate that new CW1 workers can be brought into the CNMI if all conditions are met, the proof will not come until the final regulations are out.

If and when we are allowed new CW1s, we should be able to bring in as many as needed, at least for the next couple of years. Pursuant to the CNRA, there is now a limit of 22,417 foreign workers permitted in the CNMI. Whether you follow DOL's estimate of 13-15,000, based on the number of umbrellas issued, or the Federal Ombudsman's figure of about 19,000 based on the recent registration of foreign workers, we have room to expand our foreign national worker population by between 3,500 and 8,000 people.

But any such expansion will be limited in time. The CNRA mandates that alien guest workers who do not have regular U.S. visas will be reduced to zero by the end of the transition period, Dec. 31, 2014. The CNRA also provides that if there is any additional transition period, the CW program will survive. We do not know what plan USCIS may have to reconcile the contradiction in these two mandates within the CNRA.

No New CNMI Entry Permits

The umbrella permits have been recognized as valid "work authorization" by USCIS. They allow DOL to renew existing "entry permits," through Nov. 27, 2011, at the latest. Because these permits no longer allow entry into the CNMI without pre-arranged parole or advance parole, they should now just be called LIIDS cards, after the computerized tracking system for these cards, called "LIIDS." They represent what software engineers call a "legacy" system, with a limited term. No LIIDS cards can be issued to new workers, although until Nov. 27, 2011, foreign national workers, and other aliens with currently valid CNMI immigration status will still be able to renew their LIIDS cards, or (in the case of workers) transfer employers and receive a revised LIIDS card, via the system in place under P.L. 15-108. But no worker new to the CNMI, and no new immediate relative, will receive a LIIDS card; those individuals must instead obtain a U.S. visa or other, temporary status.

No Conversion from Tourist Status

Under the CNMI immigration system, it was sometimes possible for a tourist holding a Visitor's Entry Permit (VEP) to become a worker, or an immediate relative, and get a new entry permit. Not anymore. We have been consulted by a number of people who have VEPs that were issued before Nov. 28 and are still valid; some have even had umbrellas. We have to tell them that there is no way to change their status while they remain in the CNMI, and that they must leave and obtain a U.S. visa to re-enter. Although it may be possible for someone with a U.S. B1/B2 visa (tourists and business visitors) to convert to a different status, under the U.S. system people with CNMI VEPs are no different from people who are present in the U.S. through the visa waiver system, and visa waiver visitors cannot change their immigration status.

No More Missionaries

We have had several inquiries from alien ministers of various CNMI congregations who have soon to be expiring missionary visas. CNMI missionary entry permits were eliminated effective Oct. 1, 2008. Permits existing at that time would be deemed valid until their expiration date but would not be renewed. It now appears that DOL did renew missionary permits past the 2008 deadline, because we are still encountering such valid permits. Nevertheless, this classification has now come to a close. We are advising clients with expiring missionary entry permits, who also hold umbrella permits, to do one of the following prior to their permit expiration date: (1) Go down to DOL and apply to convert to a 240L Minister of Religion permit. To qualify, the applicant has to be the leader of the congregation; "one who directs the religious affairs of a bona fide non-profit religious undertaking." There is only one such permit allowed per congregation, although assistant pastors leading a related congregation in a different location may qualify. Spouses and minor children of Ministers of Religion are also entitled to permits, although they are not permitted to work. All others employed by a religious entity are deemed "religious workers"; they can convert to a 240K work permit, issued to foreign national workers. Please note that 240L and 240K permits, under the umbrella, are both finite: they expire by operation of law on Nov. 27, 2011. In order to legally remain in the Commonwealth, ministers of religion and religious workers must obtain a visa authorized by U.S. immigration laws. Both immigrant and non-immigrant visas are possible for both ministers and religious workers, although they are strictly scrutinized and subject to many limitations.

The information contained in this column is intended as general information only, and not as individual legal advice. Readers should obtain professional legal advice before taking action with respect to their individual situations. Readers may submit questions regarding federalization or immigration issues to the authors by email to lexmarianas@pticom.com. Readers may also e-mail written questions through the Saipan Tribune *at editor@saipantribune.com.*

With al-Qaeda in Yemen, why are we in Afghanistan?

By JOEL BRINKLEY
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

Joel Brinkley is a former Pulitzer Prize-winning foreign correspondent for The New York Times *and now a professor of journalism at Stanford University. Readers may send him e-mail at: brinkley@foreign-matters.com*

Al-Qaeda in Yemen has grown so strong and adept that the United States, Britain, France, Germany and Japan were forced to close their embassies in Sanaa, Yemen, this week—so seriously are they taking al-Qaeda's "live and active threat," as John Brennan, the White House counterterrorism adviser, put it. "They've grown in strength."

Ten days earlier, it was able to send a man to the United States on a mission to blow up an airplane. He almost succeeded. What does all of that say? It says to me: Why on Earth is the U.S. sending 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan?

Speaking to cadets at West Point last month, Obama said: "I am convinced that our security is at stake in Afghanistan and Pakistan. This is the epicenter of the violent extremism practiced by al-Qaeda. It is from here that we were attacked on 9/11, and it is from here that new attacks are being plotted as I speak."

Actually, as he spoke, al-Qaeda in Yemen was plotting that airliner attack. It failed, but set off weeks of familiar recrimination and confession. At the very same time, fatalities in Afghanistan were mounting and set a record for the entire period of the West's engagement there, since October 2001. Seven Central Intelligence Agency officers were killed last week. One-third of all Americans killed in Afghanistan died during 2009. The number of British fatalities doubled.

Taliban fighters killed those soldiers. The United States and NATO are fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan, not al-Qaeda, which now has only a negligible presence—fewer than 100 men, the U.S. says.

Certainly the Taliban is a despicable, radical group, intent on enforcing the most extreme interpretation of Islamic law, turning women into uneducated chattel and men into cowed adherents. But has anyone ever shown evidence that the Taliban are a direct threat to the United States or the West? No.

Certainly the Taliban gave cover to al-Qaeda in Afghanistan prior to October 2001, and the two groups are allies of sorts in the tribal regions of western Pakistan now. But Matthew Hoh, a State Department officer stationed in Afghanistan, resigned last fall, upset over the conduct of the war—particularly what he called the conflation of the Taliban with al-Qaeda, he told numerous interviewers.

"Al-Qaeda is a worldwide organization with an apocalyptic vision to establish an Islamic caliphate throughout the world," he told the New York Post. "The Taliban's views are very local. They are not in cahoots. They have separate goals."

The fear, of course, is that if allowed to retake power in Afghanistan, the Taliban would give al-Qaeda its old haven once again. Osama bin Laden could leave his cave and climb down from the mountains. Perhaps. But this time the United States would be watching closely. If bin Laden resurfaced, he would almost certainly be captured or killed.

So what exactly are we fighting for—particularly since we now know that al-Qaeda has several other safe havens from which is it able to carry out deadly attacks. Pakistan, Somalia, Indonesia—and Yemen. Don't forget: Al-Qaeda in Yemen attacked the USS Cole off the southern city of Aden 10 years ago, killing 17 U.S. servicemen.

"The attack on the USS Cole should have been the loudest wake-up call against al-Qaeda," Abdul Karim al-Iriyani, a former prime minister of Yemen, remarked last week.

Of course, Pakistan also remains an important headquarters. Last fall, FBI agents in New York arrested Najibullah Zazi and his father on charges of planning a terror attack in the United States using sophisticated homemade bombs. The two received extensive instruction in bomb making and terrorist strategies from al-Qaeda—at a training camp in Pakistan.

Hoh, the former American diplomat, noted that a terrorist operative can plan an attack from almost anywhere. All he needs is an Internet connection, as was the case for the logistician behind the Sept. 11 attacks. He planned everything from a small apartment in Hamburg, Germany.

Still, Yemen offers a congenial location for a terrorist headquarters. Its people live in abject poverty; the average annual income is $870. Only 59 percent of the adult population can read and write. Only one person of every 100 uses the Internet. All of that presents fertile ground for al-Qaeda recruiters so that, now, Yemen has far more al-Qaeda operatives than Afghanistan, the White House says.

So, besides incurring ever-more casualties, what's the U.S. doing in Afghanistan?

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲84	▼75
Palau	Rain	▲87	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲88	▼78
Chuuk	Showers	▲89	▼78
Pohnpei	Cloudy	▲88	▼79
Kosrae	Showers	▲85	▼77
Majuro	Partly Sunny	▲86	▼77

Around The Globe

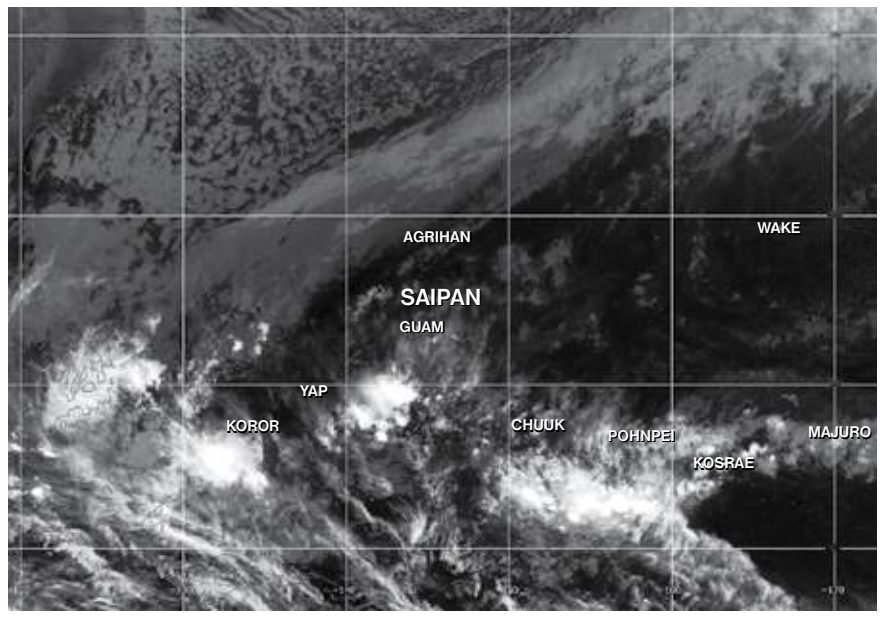
Auckland	Showers	▲68	▼61
Beijing	Sunny	▲14	▼ 1
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	▲44	▼26
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲78	▼67
London	Cloudy	▲38	▼37
Los Angeles	Partly Sunny	▲70	▼52
Manila	Cloudy	▲88	▼75
Melbourne	Thunderstorms	▲91	▼61
Miami	Cloudy	▲66	▼46
New York	Partly Sunny	▲35	▼27
Osaka	Showers	▲45	▼31
Paris	Cloudy	▲36	▼35
Pusan	Cloudy	▲36	▼13
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲47	▼37
Salem	Cloudy	▲32	▼12
San Francisco	Rain	▲60	▼50
Seoul	Flurries	▲18	▼10
Tokyo	Rain	▲44	▼30
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲36	▼23

Tides

Saipan Harbor

7:22 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
12:00 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.4 Feet
4:43 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line enters the discussion area at 17N180 and extends west-southwestward south of Wake Island at 16N167E then through Rota at 14N145E to end at 10N130E. Cloudiness and patchy rain are found along and up to 250 miles north of this feature. A near-equatorial trough extends east-southeastward from 3N130E to end at EQ158E. Low-level convergence near the trough axis is combining with favorable upper-level winds to produce scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south and east of Koror between 2N and 8N from 134E to 145E and south of Chuuk and Pohnpei between the equator and 5N from 153E to 161E. Trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers and a few thunderstorms over Tarawa and Butaritari atolls between the equator and 5N from 173E to 180.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46 AM	6:04 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:05 PM
Thursday	6:47 AM	6:05 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:06 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:07 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	4:04 AM	3:27 PM
Wednesday	4:57 AM	4:20 PM
Thursday	5:46 AM	5:12 PM
Friday	6:32 AM	6:04 PM
Saturday	7:14 AM	6:54 PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 22, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW287	6:00am	7:30pm	Daily via NRT

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW297	4:45pm	7:30pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ604/703	2:50am	11:25am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 5 via PUS
C09603/933	3:15pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW288	12:05pm	1:20am+1	Daily via NRT

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW298	10:05am	2:50pm	Daily
NW288	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ716/605	12:30am	2:20pm	4 via ICN
OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	4, 7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1 via ICN	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1 via GUM	1, 3, 5, 6, 7
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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Inauguration Day

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, right, with first lady Josie Fitial during the inauguration ceremony at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe yesterday afternoon.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Former governor Pedro P. Tenorio and his wife Sophie walk down the red carpet.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Guam dignitaries walk the red carpet at the inauguration ceremony for re-elected CNMI Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho, second from right, and first lady Joann, second from left, walk with Tan Holdings executive vice president George Chiu on their way to the inauguration ceremony of CNMI Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos and his daughter prepare to walk the red carpet, with other family members in tow.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Former governor Juan N. Babauta, right, and his wife Sharlene, walk the red carpet.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

A man blows the horn as part of the traditional sawii/kulu, which kicked off the inauguration ceremonies.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos takes his oath of office, with CNMI Superior Court Associate Judge Perry Inos officiating the swearing in.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

SENATE INAUGURATION
Sen. Ralph DLG. Torres, second from left, poses with his mother, three brothers and one sister who are all lawyers.

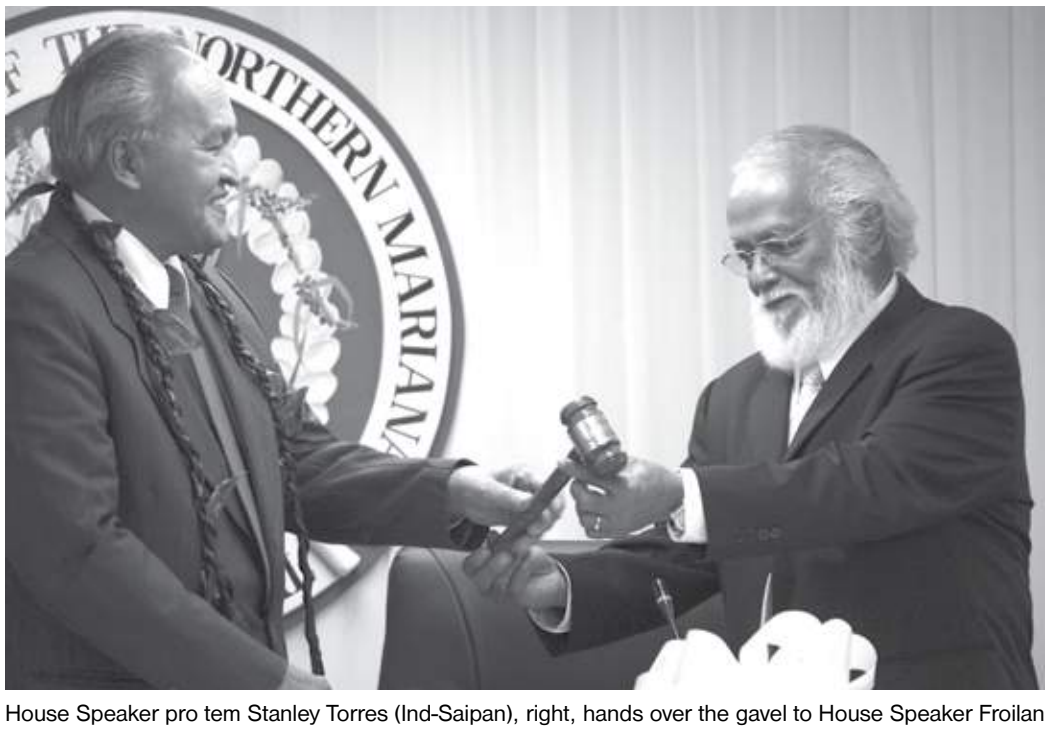
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Marianas High School JROTC Color Guard during the presentation of colors at the 17th Senate inauguration yesterday.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

HOUSE INAUGURATION
From left, Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho and first lady Joann Camacho, Vicky Benavente and her husband, Rep. Diego T. Benavente, right after the organizational session of the 17th House of Representatives on Capital Hill yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



House Speaker pro tem Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan), right, hands over the gavel to House Speaker Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan), left, after the voting of officers of the 17th House of Representatives yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Nine senators pose for a group photo with Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos, presiding judge Robert Naraja, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Insular Areas Anthony M. Babauta, and Youth Congress Speaker Alana May Leon Guerrero.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Associate Judge John Manglona with his wife associate judge Ramona V. Manglona, special assistant for administration Esther Fleming, and associate judge David Wiseman were among the guests at the 17th Senate inauguration.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Newly installed House Speaker Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan), center top, gives instruction to House legal counsel Joey San Nicolas, bottom right, while Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, left, and Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos stand beside him.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

From left, CNMI Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho, Office of Insular Affairs Director Nik Pula, and Palau President Johnson Toribiong, are among the dignitaries in attendance at the inaugural session of the 17th House of Representatives yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Business

Reports: JAL to cut 15,600 jobs, reject cash bids

AP

Japan Airlines jetliners are parked at Narita International Airport in Narita, east of Tokyo, Friday night, Jan. 8, 2010.

TOKYO (AP)—Troubled Japan Airlines Corp. is set to cut about 15,600 jobs, a third of its work force, and reject billion-dollar cash offers from Delta and American Airlines, as it files for bankruptcy and embarks on a government-led turnaround, reports said Monday.

Under a rehabilitation plan now being hammered out by a state-backed corporate turnaround body, JAL would make the job cuts during the three fiscal years through March 2013, Kyodo News reported. The plan would include a fresh investment of 300 billion yen ($3.3 billion) by the body and wipe much of its soaring debts under bankruptcy protection.

JAL's shares, which have plunged in recent weeks, are to be delisted, the Asahi newspaper reported.

Officials at JAL, the transport ministry and the turnaround body could not be reached for comment Monday, a national holiday in Japan. The stock market was also closed.

The state-backed Enterprise Turnaround Initiative Corp. of Japan will decline cash offers from Delta and American Airlines as it fears giving foreign carriers a foreign stake in the company would complicate the restructuring, according to media reports.

Instead, the airline will pursue only greater cooperation with either Delta or American, the business daily Nikkei said Sunday. The turnaround body will pick one of the U.S. carriers as JAL's partner after February, it said.

Study: Newspapers still a step ahead in local news

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Most local news still flows from newspapers even as an Internet-driven upheaval diminishes the depth of their coverage, according to a study to be released Monday.

The findings are based on an analysis of how local news stories evolved in Baltimore during one week last summer. The review by Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism monitored 53 media outlets—newspapers, television and radio stations and Web-only operations.

Newspapers and their Web sites provided 61 percent of the original reporting or fresh information on six major news stories that unfolded during the week of July 19-25, the study found. Local television stations and their Web sites accounted for 28 percent of the new information, followed by radio stations and their sites at 7 percent and Internet-only "new media" at 4 percent.

The conclusions bolster the arguments of newspaper publishers and editors who trumpet their publications as indispensable sources of information about their communities.

J. Montgomery Cook, editor of The Baltimore Sun, wishes the study would have examined more than just a one-week window. A longer look "would have more clearly proven how dominant and comprehensive The Sun is compared to other media," Cook wrote in an e-mail.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

China becomes biggest exporter, edging out Germany

BEIJING (AP)—Already the biggest auto market and steel maker, China edged past Germany in 2009 to become the top exporter, yet another sign of its rapid rise and the spread of economic power from West to East. Total 2009 exports were more than $1.2 trillion, China's customs agency said Sunday. That was ahead of the 816 billion euros ($1.17 trillion) forecast for Germany by its foreign trade organization, BGA. China's new status is mostly symbolic but highlights its growing presence as an industrial power, major buyer of oil, iron ore and other commodities and, increasingly, as an investor and key voice in managing the global economy. Its ability to unseat longtime export leader Germany reflects the ability of agile, low-cost Chinese manufacturers to keep selling abroad even as other exporters have been hammered by a slump in global demand.

NYC asks food manufacturers to cut salt content

NEW YORK (AP)—City health officials have battled trans fat and high-calorie fast food. Now, they're taking on salt. The health department planned to release on Monday draft guidelines suggesting the maximum amount of salt that should be in a wide variety of manufactured and packaged foods. The recommendations call for sizable reductions in the sodium content of many products, from a 20 percent drop in peanut butter to a 40 percent decline in canned vegetables. Unlike the city's recent ban on trans fat in restaurant food or rules implemented last year requiring chain restaurants to post calorie information on their menus, this initiative is purely voluntary.

Oil rises above $83 amid strong China demand

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices jumped above $83 a barrel Monday in Asia amid signs of strong Chinese demand for crude and rebel attacks on Nigerian supplies. Benchmark crude for February delivery was up 80 cents to $83.55 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. On Friday, the contract rose 9 cents to settle at $82.75. China said Sunday that oil imports rose 14 percent last year to a record high in December, part of a 56 percent surge in overall imports last month. The better than expected Chinese figures helped investors brush off Friday's disappointing U.S. jobless report, which showed the economy lost 85,000 jobs in December and the unemployment rate was steady at 10 percent. Crude prices have spiked 20 percent in the last month as a rash of cold winter weather in parts of the U.S., Europe and Asia boost demand for oil products such as heating oil.

Nation

GOP: Response to Reid remark shows double standard

WASHINGTON (AP)—Republicans on Sunday accused Democrats of a double standard by accepting Sen. Harry Reid's apology for racial remarks about Barack Obama instead of demanding Reid's ouster as majority leader.

In a private conversation reported in a new book, Reid described Obama during the 2008 presidential campaign as a "light-skinned" African-American "with no Negro dialect, unless he wanted to have one."

Reid, D-Nev., apologized to Obama on Saturday, and the president issued a statement accepting the apology and saying the matter was closed.

GOP Chairman Michael Steele, in appearances on two Sunday news programs, compared Reid's predicament with the circumstances that led Senate Republican leader Trent Lott to step down from that post in 2002. Lott had spoken favorably of the 1948 segregationist presidential campaign of Strom Thurmond, and in spite of apologies for those remarks at Thurmond's 100th birthday, Lott was forced out as leader.

Reid

"There is this standard where the Democrats feel that they can say these things and they can apologize when it comes from the mouths of their own. But if it comes from anyone else, it's racism," said Steele, who is black. "It's either racist or it's not. And it's inappropriate, absolutely."

Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, the chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, said in a statement that Reid should step down, calling his comments "embarrassing and racially insensitive."

Malfunction forces emergency landing at NJ airport

NEWARK, N.J. (AP)—A United Airlines jetliner landed Sunday without one of its landing gear fully deployed, damaging its right wing after a frightening few moments for passengers, who were braced in the crash position before an "unbelievably smooth" touchdown that drew cheers.

All 53 people aboard got off the plane safely.

Flight 634 from Chicago was approaching Newark Liberty International Airport about 9 a.m. when the plane suddenly began ascending again, said passenger Paul Wasylyszyn of Chicago.

The plane then began circling the airport, said Jim Falk of Middletown, N.J., who was sitting near the front of the plane.

"Normally a big plane like that doesn't do a bypass, so we knew something was wrong," said Falk, 40.

The captain then came over the intercom, advising the 48 passengers that there was "an issue" with one of the landing gears on the Airbus 319 and they were trying to fix it. The captain was composed about the announcements, several passengers said, commending the crew for it.

"They did a great job," Falk said of the captain and crew. "There was no yelling, screaming, panicking or anything."

Despite the problem, the mood was calm, even when passengers were instructed to gird themselves for a crash, said Falk, who sent several text messages to his wife about what was happening as she was on her way to pick him up from the airport.

Cold weather strengthens grip in the South

MIAMI (AP)—Freakish cold weather continued to grip the South, with snow flurries spotted around Orlando and a record low set for Miami, and forecasters said Sunday that more of the same was expected.

About 100,000 tropical fish being raised on a fish farm in South Florida couldn't bear the cold. Michael Breen, 43, who owns Breen Acres Aquatics in the small town of Loxahatchee Groves just north of Miami, said temperatures dropped below 30 degrees overnight, leaving ice on his 76 ponds.

The ponds should be green because of algae bloom that feeds baby fish, he said.

"But all the ponds are crystal clear and fish are laying on the bottom. What we see on the surface died two days ago," he said, referring to the dead fish found floating Sunday morning.

Breen estimated he lost $535,000 in business because of the cold.

The National Weather Service issued a hard freeze warning for South Florida from Sunday night to Monday morning. A freeze watch will continue through Tuesday. Northern Florida residents will feel temperatures drop to the lower 20s and mid-teens. On Saturday night, a temperature of 35 degrees set a record that had stood since 1970, said Joel Rothfuss with the National Weather Service in Miami.

ACROSS THE NATION

Calif. boy, 3, dead after pit bull attack

APPLE VALLEY, Calif. (AP)—Authorities say a 3-year-old boy has died after his family's pit bull attacked him at a home in Southern California The San Bernardino County Sheriff-Coroner Department said in a statement Sunday that 3-year-old Omar Martinez was declared dead at Saint Mary Medical Center in Apple Valley. Authorities answered a 911 call Saturday afternoon reporting that a boy had been attacked by a dog and had stopped breathing. Paramedics found the boy unresponsive and took him to the hospital, where he died about two hours later. Authorities say the dog was aggressive toward firefighters when they arrived at the Apple Valley home, and a sheriff's deputy shot and killed the animal.

Missing baby's mom held in Ariz. on felony charges

PHOENIX (AP)—The Arizona mother at the center of a missing baby case has been charged with kidnapping, child abuse and custodial interference. The Tempe Police Department said Sunday that 23-year-old Elizabeth Johnson is being held at the Maricopa County jail on the three felony charges after being extradited from Florida, where she was taken into custody Dec. 30 after failing to show up for a custodial hearing in Phoenix. Police say she's being held on a cash only $1.1 million bond. Authorities are trying to determine what happened to Johnson's 8-month-old son, Gabriel, who was last seen with her in San Antonio last month. Authorities are calling a Scottsdale couple "persons of interest" in the case. The couple has said they befriended Johnson at an airport and that she wanted to give her son up for adoption.

Hundreds strip in NYC for no-pants subway ride

NEW YORK (AP)—Hundreds of New Yorkers have been riding the city's subway trains in their underwear. They stripped down to their undies on Sunday for the ninth annual No Pants Subway Ride. The idea is to act like nothing unusual is going on. Participants met up at six locations throughout the city. They formed groups and dispersed to subway stations to catch trains. Once inside the subway cars, they began calmly removing their pants and folding them up. Most people read magazines or chatted with their companions like any other straphanger. The event started in 2002 with just seven people. It has spread to other cities. The stunt is organized by Improv Everywhere, a group that says its mission is to cause "scenes of chaos and joy in public places."

Asia

US envoy blasts 'appalling' NKorean human rights

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea's 'appalling' human rights situation must improve before the country can expect to normalize relations with the United States, President Barack Obama's special envoy on the issue said Monday.

In comments certain to anger North Korea, Robert King blasted its human rights record as a U.S. citizen remains under detention for crossing into the communist country last month without permission.

"It's one of the worst places in terms of lack of human rights," King told reporters after meeting South Korea's foreign minister. "The situation is appalling."

King

King said that is preventing the normalization of ties between Washington and Pyongyang, which have never had diplomatic relations and remain locked in a standoff over North Korea's nuclear weapons programs.

"Improved relations between the United States and North Korea will have to involve greater respect for human rights by North Korea," he said.

King, a former staff director on the House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs Committee, is on his first visit overseas as special envoy for North Korean human rights. The position was created in 2005 by Congress to raise the issue of human rights and provide assistance to refugees fleeing North Korea.

King plans to travel to Japan on Friday. He has no plans to visit North Korea, though said he would be "happy to go" if Pyongyang invited him.

King called on North Korea to release the U.S. citizen it is holding, but acknowledged that Washington had little information on the person.

Japan to come clean on secret nuke deals with US

TOKYO (AP)—To the government's critics, it was a long and shocking act of official stonewalling: Agreements long hidden in Foreign Ministry files allowed nuclear-armed U.S. warships to enter Japanese ports, violating a hallowed principle of postwar Japan. Yet their very existence was officially denied.

Now, in a clear break from the past, a new prime minister has gone where none of his predecessors dared go: He has ordered a panel of ministry officials and academics to investigate the secret agreements.

The findings, due out this month, are part of Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's wide-ranging campaign to wrest power from the bureaucracy and make government more open than under the conservatives, who ruled Japan for most of the past 50 years.

They also could intensify public debate about the future of Japan's long-standing security alliance with the U.S., which has bases here. Hatoyama, a liberal who took office in September, has called for making the relationship more balanced, starting with efforts to evict an unpopular U.S. base from the island of Okinawa.

That Japan agreed to let nuclear-armed ships enter its ports and waters ceased to be a secret some years ago with the declassification of American documents. Such ships had routinely docked in various Japanese ports since the 1960s, sometimes setting off protests.

Church attacks in Malaysia deepen racial tension

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Eight churches were attacked over three days amid a dispute over the use of the word "Allah" by non-Muslims, sparking fresh political instability that is denting Malaysia's image as a moderate and stable Muslim-majority nation.

The unprecedented attacks from Friday to Sunday have set off a wave of disquiet among Malaysia's minority Christians and strained their ties with the majority Malay Muslims. About 9 percent of Malaysia's 28 million people are Christian, most of whom are ethnic Chinese or Indian. Muslims make up 60 percent of the population and most are ethnic Malays.

The attacks are a blow to racial unity espoused by Prime Minister Najib Razak under his "1Malaysia" slogan since taking power in April, and pose a headache for him as he seeks to strengthen his ruling coalition after its losses in 2008 general elections.

"It showed that, after 52 years of living together, nation building and national unity is in tatters," said Charles Santiago, an opposition member of Parliament. "The church attacks shattered notions of Malaysia as a model secular Muslim nation in the eyes of the international community.

"Malaysians are now living in fear of a racial clash following the church attacks and rising orthodox Islamic tones in the country," Santiago said.

Late Sunday, some 130 Muslim voluntary groups offered to help protect the churches by becoming the "eyes and ears" of the police, said Nadzim Johan, a representative of the groups.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Philippine police arrest 18 at start of gun ban

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — About 50,000 Philippine policemen began enforcing a five-month ban on carrying guns in public Sunday in hopes of avoiding bloodshed in the buildup to May elections, arresting 18 violators at checkpoints across the country. The Philippines is a lively democracy and elections are often marred by violence and fraud. In the 2007 local and congressional elections, 108 people were killed in election-related violence, including 15 candidates, national police spokesman Chief Supt. Leonardo Espina said Sunday. Last week National Police Chief Jesus Verzosa said 558 of the country's 1,634 cities and municipalities have been identified as areas of concern and will get added attention from security forces ahead of the national and local polls, which include a vote for president.

Filipinos honor Black Nazarene in annual festival

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Hundreds of thousands of Roman Catholics in the Philippines followed a centuries old statue of Jesus Christ through the streets of Manila on Saturday as part of annual ritual in which devotees express gratitude and seek redemption from sins, miracle cures and a better life. The Black Nazarene's mostly male devotees—barefoot and clad in maroon shirts—converged for an early morning mass at the sprawling grounds of a seaside parade grandstand before the statue was paraded toward Manila's Quiapo Church, its home. The crowd numbered at least 1 million, Manila police said, but there were no independent estimates. The life-size wooden statue of Jesus Christ was brought from Mexico to Manila on a galleon in 1606 by Spanish missionaries. The ship caught fire, but the charred-black statue survived and thus was called the Black Nazarene.

Man arrested after acid attack in Hong Kong

HONG KONG (AP)—Police arrested a man early Sunday after two bottles of corrosive liquid were hurled into a crowd at one of Hong Kong's famous tourist spots, officials said. At least 30 people were injured in the city's latest acid attack. The victims, including children and tourists, were all treated at local hospitals for burns and other injuries and released. The liquid was thrown on them Saturday night near Temple Street, a densely populated district known for its outdoor shops and restaurants in the city's Kowloon area. Hong Kong has seen a series of similar attacks since December 2008 that have injured more than 100 people.

World

Yemen's president open to dialogue with al-Qaida

SAN'A, Yemen (AP)—Yemen's president said he is ready to talk to al-Qaida members who renounce violence, suggesting he could show them the same kind of leniency he has granted militants in the past despite U.S. pressure to crack down on the terror group.

Yemen is moving cautiously in the fight against al-Qaida, worried over a potential backlash in a country where anger at the U.S. and extremism are widespread. Thousands of Yemenis are battle-hardened veterans of past "holy wars" in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Chechnya and Iraq, and though most are not engaged in violence now they preserve a die-hard al-Qaida ideology.

"Any movement against al-Qaida will lead to the fall of the Yemeni regime," warned Ali Mohammed Omar, a Yemeni who fought in Afghanistan from 1990-1992 and says he met Osama bin Laden twice during that time.

If the U.S. or its allies become directly involved, "the whole (Yemeni) people will become al-Qaida. Instead of 30 or 40 people, it would become millions," he told The Associated Press in an interview.

Yemeni forces recently launched their heaviest strikes and raids against al-Qaida in years, and Washington has praised San'a for showing a new determination against al-Qaida's offshoot in the country.

AP
Al-Qaida sympathizer, Ali Mohammed Omar, 42 talks to the Associated Press in the capital San'a, Yemen Saturday, Jan. 9, 2010.

French Guiana, Martinique reject autonomy proposal

FORT-DE-FRANCE, Martinique (AP)—Voters in Martinique and French Guiana overwhelmingly rejected a proposal Sunday to give local government more autonomy while remaining a part of France.

Election officials in Martinique said 80 percent of voters rejected the plan, with 55 percent participation, according to preliminary results. Some votes remained to be counted, but officials did not expect the results to change significantly.

In French Guiana, 70 percent voted "no," with 48 percent turnout.

Some Martinique officials viewed the proposed autonomy as an opportunity for the Caribbean island to make decisions in areas such as development, education and employment. They argued the remote French government did not know what was best for the island.

"Martinique and French Guiana missed a date with history and passed alongside a reform that would have allowed them to better understand their future," said Claude Lise, president of Martinique's General Council, one of two legislative bodies.

WORLD BRIEFS

Kenya fishermen see upside to pirates: more fish

MALINDI, Kenya (AP)—People here have one thing to thank Somali pirates for: Better fishing. In past years, illegal commercial trawlers parked off Somalia's coast and scooped up the ocean's contents. Now, fishermen on the northern coast of neighboring Kenya say, the trawlers are not coming because of pirates. "There is a lot of fish now, there is plenty of fish. There is more fish than people can actually use because the international fishermen have been scared away by the pirates," said Athman Seif, the director of the Malindi Marine Association.

Abu Dhabi sheik in torture trial acquitted

ALAIN, United Arab Emirates (AP)—A member of the United Arab Emirates' ruling family on trial in connection with the videotaped beating of an Afghan man was cleared of all charges Sunday. Judge Mubarak al-Awad acquitted Sheik Issa bin Zayed Al Nahyan of all charges in a UAE criminal court in the oasis city of Al Ain. The charges against Issa, a half brother of the country's president, included endangering a life, causing bodily harm and rape. A security guard who was seen on the video assisting the sheik with the beating also was acquitted. It was the first time that a member of the ruling family of this wealthy Gulf Arab nation had been put on trial, but human rights groups were quick to criticize Issa's acquittal.

Ex-prosecutor blamed for 3 protester prison deaths

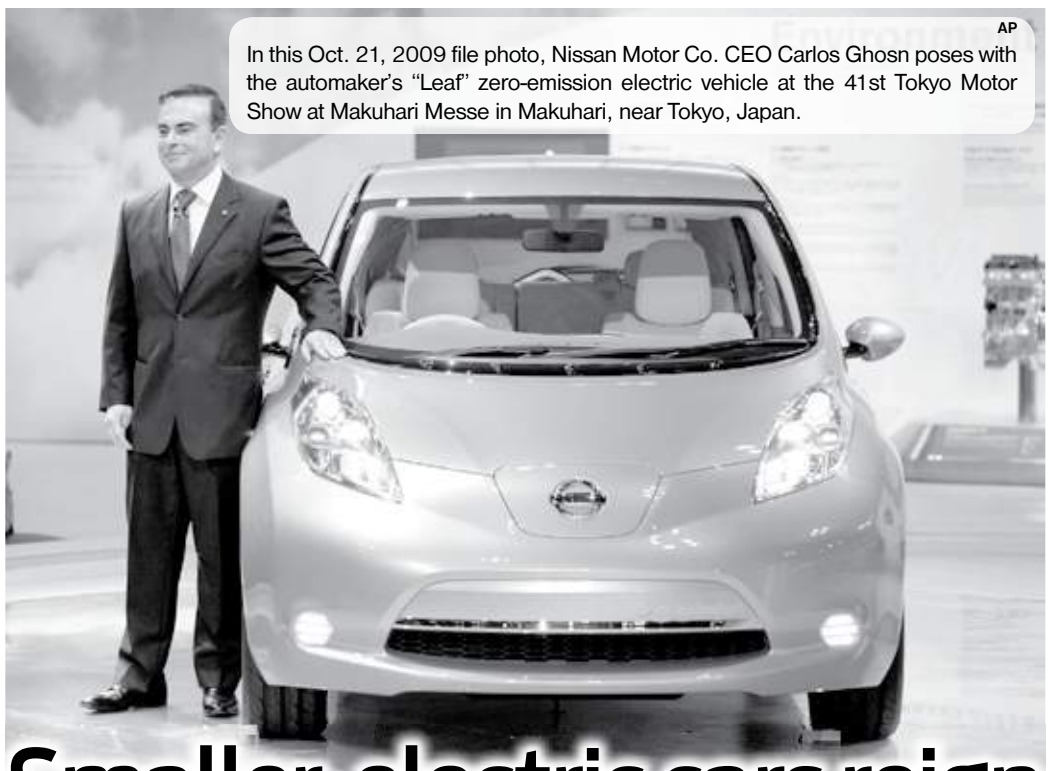
TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—A parliamentary investigation made public on Sunday found the former Tehran prosecutor responsible for the deaths of at least three anti-government protesters imprisoned in the turmoil following Iran's disputed June elections. Saeed Mortazavi was the capital's prosecutor responsible for Kahrizak prison at the time of the three prison deaths in July. Hundreds of protesters were detained amid massive street protests over an election the opposition claimed was fraudulent. "The deaths of the three were the result of four days in custody suffering from beatings in a place without proper food, water or health conditions," said Kazem Jalali, a lawmaker and spokesman for the investigation.

Heavy snow halts planes, trains and cars in Europe

BERLIN (AP)—Europeans were struggling to restore roads and railways Sunday after heavy snow caused hundreds of traffic accidents, halted flights from Germany and France, downed power lines in Poland and trapped more than 160 people overnight on a frozen German highway. The 148 adults and 19 children stuck on Germany's coastal A20 highway survived by running their car engines until rescuers using snow plows and excavators pushed through 6.5-foot (2-meter) drifts to free them Sunday morning, police in the town of Altentreptow said. "At least the firefighters were able to bring them hot beverages and food while they were waiting," said Jens Apelt, a spokesman for the Altentreptow highway police. After being rescued, the people were brought to tents set up by local aid organizations until rescuers could unblock all the cars.

Overdrive

By TOM KRISHER
AP AUTO WRITER



AP
In this Oct. 21, 2009 file photo, Nissan Motor Co. CEO Carlos Ghosn poses with the automaker's "Leaf" zero-emission electric vehicle at the 41st Tokyo Motor Show at Makuhari Messe in Makuhari, near Tokyo, Japan.

Smaller, electric cars reign at Detroit auto show

DETROIT (AP)—Electric, hybrid and small cars will grab center stage at the Detroit auto show this week, as the industry adapts to a world reshaped by the Great Recession and environmental worries.

The event will demonstrate just how automakers are responding to this new reality. Ford wants to build on its success in midsize sedans and re-ignite its small car sales, while Hyundai aims to extend last year's triumph in budget-conscious models. GM and Chrysler will start fresh with electric vehicles but also try to boost their small-car credibility. Toyota hopes to solidify its dominance in hybrids.

The new crop of models must be successful if automakers are to reverse last year's 21 percent sales plunge. Mounting job losses, GM and Chrysler's bankruptcy filings and the death of several iconic brands sent sales skidding to their lowest level since 1982.

Americans feel less wealthy - and more certain that the trend toward higher fuel prices remains a threat. It's a change U.S. automakers were slow to embrace—and it cost them the last two years as gas prices surged and consumers stopped spending. Most Japanese and European car makers were also caught in the sales downdraft, even though they depended less on pickup trucks.

In 2010, with frugality embedded in drivers' minds, automakers want to show off new versions of smaller, less expensive cars, many of which get 40 mpg on highways. That also appeals to motorists concerned about climate change.

The show isn't exclusively about small cars. Detroit automakers also will try to revive 1960s-style car passion with muscle cars, a niche that's doing well.

Compared with last year's stripped-down down affair, the show will offer more glitter. GM will have an elevated floor for new cars, a change from 2009's carpet-over-concrete that was just about everywhere.

One big display is a 37,000-square-foot "Electric Avenue" on the main floor, featuring 20 vehicles that run on kilowatts instead of gasoline. Electrics were shown last year, but shared the spotlight with cars powered by conventional engines.

"Last year we had that 'sky-is-falling' mentality, and everybody was running for cover," says Doug Fox, an Ann Arbor, Mich., car dealer and chairman of this year's show, officially called the North American International Auto Show. "We are seeing a little more investment made in the actual exhibits than last year."

Although auto sales improved at the end of 2009, the 41 new vehicles to be unveiled at this year's show will be down from last year's 50, Fox says.

That's because Chrysler LLC, which normally shows five or six new vehicles, has no debuts, and GM has fewer new vehicles because it is shedding the Pontiac, Hummer, Saturn and Saab brands, Fox says.

Here are some key trends to watch at this year's Detroit auto show:

SMALL IS BIG

Small cars and smaller SUVs—called crossovers—made up only 21 percent of U.S. sales in 2003. But last year, they rose to 32 percent and are expected to grow to 36 percent in 2013. Buyers will see that trend reflected at the show.

General Motors Co. will show off the new Chevrolet Aveo subcompact. The Aveo has been given a more powerful engine, and a lower grille and 19-inch tires for a tougher appearance. The four-door Aveo, along with Ford Motor Co.'s new Focus and Chevrolet Spark minicar, will be part of a small-car blitz. All three will get near 40 mpg on the highway.

"The new paradigm of the American passenger car is no longer great, big rear-wheel-drive luxobarges," says Aaron Bragman, an auto analyst for the consulting firm IHS Global Insight in Troy, Mich. "It's small, efficient and upscale."

ELECTRIC BUZZ GETS LOUDER

Much of the show's buzz is expected to come from electric vehicles, which have jumped off the drawing board and onto the convention floor. Several big automakers plan to sell them in late 2010, giving the broader public its first chance to buy cars that rely more on electrical outlets than gas pumps.

The big draw is the chance to stop burning gas and drive a more environmentally friendly car, but the cars are expensive.

Nissan Motor Co.'s rechargeable Leaf, due in showrooms late this year, will make its first appearance inside a U.S. auto show. The Leaf is purely electric, using just a rechargeable battery for power. But its expected cost is about $30,000. Chevrolet's Volt, unveiled three years ago and for sale this fall, will make a reappearance at the show. It costs about $40,000, although there are up to $7,500 in tax credits available.

China's BYD Co. LTD, which has the backing of billionaire investor Warren Buffett, plans to show the F3DM plug-in hybrid compact sedan and the new e6 that could come to the U.S. late this year.

Among the Europeans, BMW AG will unveil an electric concept car.

Toyota, whose Prius has dominated gas-electric hybrid sales across the globe, plans to show a new hybrid car.

Unlike the last few years, Chinese automakers largely will skip the show, perhaps because they're focusing on their own country's explosive sales growth. Still, any car maker that wants to grow must focus on the U.S., where Asian manufacturers collectively grabbed a bigger chunk of the market than Detroit manufacturers for the first time last year.

One floor below the main level, people can ride with a professional driver in electric cars on a tree-lined course, another sign of the dramatic transition from internal combustion engines to electric.

SWING BACK TO 60s MUSCLE

Muscle cars, while a small part of the market, sold relatively well last year with the Mustang outdueling the Camaro for the top sales spot. Each automaker sold more than 60,000 of the cars.

Ford will put a bigger, more powerful V-8 into the Mustang, while GM plans to show a Chevrolet Camaro convertible muscle car and a sporty GS version of the Buick Regal midsize sedan.

New designs for both small and performance cars generally are following trends toward smaller windows and higher door lines that rise from the hood to rear. Side and hood creases in the sheet metal are designed to make cars appear as they are moving even while still.

AP
This file image provided by General Motors Friday Jan. 8, 2010 shows the 2011 Chevrolet Aveo RS show car. GM, which has lost more than $88 billion since 2005, will show off the new Chevrolet Aveo subcompact at the Detroit auto show this week.

LUTZ: GM should be 'solidly profitable' down road

DETROIT (AP)—General Motors Co. should be "solidly profitable" when demand for new cars and trucks rebounds to normal levels, a top executive said on the eve of the Detroit auto show.

Bob Lutz, GM's vice chairman, said during a speech Sunday to the Society of Automotive Analysts that the U.S. automaker had made strides only months after it restructured through more than $50 billion in federal aid and a government-led bankruptcy.

"I think we are finally in a position where, from a financial structure, we should be," Lutz said. "Anything remotely resembling normal industry demand, we should be solidly profitable."

Lutz's prediction followed statements last week by chairman and interim CEO Ed Whitacre Jr., who said GM could be profitable this year although it would depend on economic factors.

Looking ahead to 2010, analysts at the annual outlook conference described an industry in the middle of massive structural changes marked by government intervention, new competition from India and China, and technological innovation that could fundamentally alter vehicles.

John Casesa, managing partner with Casesa Shapiro Group, said that while the landscape for the industry had shifted rapidly in the past year, companies that have restructured to break even at U.S. annual sales of 10 million to 11 million vehicles could post sharp profits when sales levels return.

U.S. sales fell about 20 percent in 2009 to 10.4 million vehicles, its worst performance in nearly three decades. Lutz said GM is predicting U.S. sales of about 11 million to 12 million vehicles in 2010, raising hopes that it could approach profitability.

Ford unveils 2012 Focus, designed as 'world car'

DETROIT (AP)—Ford Motor Co. is unveiling the 2012 Focus, a small sedan that is the company's first truly global car.

The new Focus, due in European and North American showrooms early next year, was designed and engineered to be sold worldwide using almost all the same parts, unlike past versions. It'll be sold in Asia, the Americas, and Europe.

The aim is to keep costs down and make money on small cars, a segment that used to be a loser. The Focus also shows that gas mileage is a prime motivator now for more frugal car buyers, and that small-car owners still want performance, quality and a lot of features. Pricing will be announced closer to the date it arrives in showrooms.

Ford unveils the new four- and five-door Focuses on Monday at the Detroit auto show. The cars are equipped with a new two-liter four-cylinder engine and six-speed automatic transmission. The company wouldn't reveal gas mileage, but said it will be significantly better than the current North American Focus, which gets up to 35 mpg on the highway.

It also has the same electronic-controlled suspension as the European Focus, generally known for better handling than U.S. vehicles.

But Jim Hughes, the Focus' chief engineer, said new technology will allow it to handle well without compromising ride quality.

"It certainly has a lot more steering precision and agility," he said. "The vehicle itself will still be very, very comfortable."

The new Focus' interior is slightly larger than the current version, and Ford says it will be quieter than all vehicles in its class and even the larger Honda Accord midsize car.

The Focus styling has a smaller windows and lines that rise from front to back. Hughes said they took steps to reduce wind drag.

Life & Style

Cleaning out the Clutter

By JURA KONCIUS and TERRI SAPIENZA
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

Now that it's a new year, why not get a fresh start by confronting the contents of your attic, basement and closets—and maybe make some cash in the process?

There are many options for downsizing collections you inherited or amassed yourself, or for furniture that has more sentimental value than style.

Here's our plan to reclaim your storage space: Get your stuff into the hands of people who want it by selling it to a dealer, on consignment, at auction or online. The bonus is a little extra money at a time when many of us could use it.

We chose six categories—books, records, furniture, stamps, sports trading cards and vintage wedding dresses—and found several avenues for possible resale. Experts in every field stressed that the items in the best condition will net the best price.

Other tips: Always call ahead. Investigate several venues if possible. The savviest sellers are informed about the market and realistic about value. Let's be honest: Not everything you want to get rid of will find a buyer.

If you make a few dollars or none at all, at the very least you've liberated some valuable space in your home. That's something you can't put a price on.

Stamps: Childhood collection or passion?

By JURA KONCIUS
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

A stamp expert can usually tell within minutes whether that old album filled with postage stamps has any great value. It often boils down to whether the collection was a childhood hobby, where someone bought packets of assorted stamps, or a lifetime passion reflected in a well-organized, well-cared-for assortment that a lot of time and money went into.

"Most collections are worth under $100, but there are exceptions, and we've see things worth into the thousands," says David Most of Maryland Stamps & Coins in Bethesda (www.marylandstamps.com), which has been around for 35 years.

Dealers and independent collectors or appraisers will usually look at your album at no charge and roughly estimate its worth; they might offer to buy it. Consider getting several estimates if you're selling. "It's worth a shot," says Lance Munoz of Maryland Coin Exchange (301-589-2278). He says meticulously kept collections will generally be worth more.

Most experts charge an hourly fee for a written appraisal. "It's a very specialized area," says Glenn Nozick (301-315-6257), a Maryland stamp appraiser and collector. He says people are often disappointed that first-day covers (envelopes with stamps canceled on their date of issue) and sheets of commemoratives, once touted as investments, usually don't increase in value.

One good thing about a stamp: If it hasn't been canceled, it can still be used as postage. Dealers usually know of organizations, veterans groups and schools that welcome donated stamps.

always popular. Also, says Josh Harkavy of Red Onion Records & Books (www.redonionrecordsandbooks.com), college students love putting 1960s and 1970s album covers on their walls.

If you hoard cassette tapes waiting for them to go up in value, forget it. At best, they might be worth 10 cents each.

Vinyl: It's a hit with 20-somethings

By JURA KONCIUS
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

So you've finally decided to part with that crate of college records. Don't expect sales proceeds from your Eagles or James Taylor LPs to replenish your stock portfolio. A rare Van Morrison 1968 "Astral Weeks" album, however, could finance a nice lunch.

The good news: Vinyl is hot with teens and 20-somethings who hang out at used-record stores flipping through stacks of classic rock, punk rock, jazz, funk and soul formerly owned by baby boomers. If you want to sell, store owners will quickly assess your music. They usually pay $1 for what they can use; most of it they can't. The value comes from the number of records produced—or whether the music is obscure and never released on CD.

"The average collection is a box or two full of Elton John, Billy Joel, that kind of stuff," says Johnson Lee, who runs Joe's Record Paradise (www.joesrecordparadise.com). "Most of the 1970s albums were so popular they printed millions of copies, but it's weird: For almost every artist there is one specific album that's worth something."

Covers matter. James Brown's 1950s "Please Please Please" with the legs on the cover has sold for $400. (Not many were cut.) The Rolling Stones' 1971 "Sticky Fingers" album with the zipper on the cover (about $8 to $25) is

Another trip down the aisle for a wedding dress

By JURA KONCIUS
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

The generation that grew up shopping for vintage clothes is getting married and looking for retro wedding dresses. Good news if you have your mom's Priscilla of Boston silk gown boxed up under a bed.

"There is a market for vintage wedding dresses," says Rachel Leonard, Brides magazine fashion director. "Mixing old with new is big: It could be a dress or veil, or just vintage shoes or cocktail hat." Two styles she says are very salable: 1950s designs with tight waist and full skirt, and 1930s Hollywood-inspired charmeuse gowns. The hit TV series "Mad Men" has created a yen for 1960s formal gowns. Not in demand: the 1970s peasant-look or bohemian garb.

At Antiquedress.com, owner Deborah Burke specializes in high-end gowns, including ones on consignment. She splits the selling price of the gown with the consigner. (Prices are $150 to $5,000.) Burke's caution to would-be sellers: Condition is everything. "No bride wants to wear a wedding gown that has spots and stains and odors on it. Think of yourself as a bride and what you would want to wear."

Furniture: Getting past sentimentality

By TERRI SAPIENZA
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

Just because your grandparents gave you antique furniture doesn't mean you have to keep it. If you can get past the sentimental value, consider consignment shops. But before you load up your car, keep the following guidelines in mind:

Pieces you want to sell should be close to flawless, with no rips, tears, stains or broken legs. Most shop owners request you e-mail clear photos of larger pieces before hauling them in. Include background information in your e-mails, too, such as dimensions, manufacturer, designer and approximate age. If they accept your furniture, you'll sign a short-term contract (typically, about 90 days) and agree to split the sale price with the shop. Judith Carrig, co-owner of Capital Consignment in Bethesda, Md. (www.capitalconsignment.net), says expect to get a third of the retail price if the piece is in perfect condition. "If you have a Crate and Barrel sofa that you paid $1,000 for, you'd probably be able to sell it for $300 to $400 if it's in pristine condition."

Exchange trading cards for cash

By TERRI SAPIENZA
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

In 2007, a mint-condition 1909 Honus Wagner baseball card sold for $2.8 million. Fewer than 100 cards of the famed shortstop, considered one of the best players of all time, are thought to exist, so it's unlikely that a financial windfall is sitting in a box in your basement. But if you own a collection of old sports trading cards, they might be worth sifting through.

According to buyers, the sports cards worth the most are from the 1950s and 1960s. Baseball is the most popular sport (followed by football, then basketball and hockey), and names that will bring you the most money include Mickey Mantle, Ted Williams, Jackie Robinson, Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Roberto Clemente and Sandy Koufax.

Older cards in excellent condition and those of Hall of Famers are the most sought after, says Peter Averinos of Hall of Fame Cards in Potomac, Md., who once sold a 1954 Ted Williams card for $4,000. But expect shop owners to tell you they need to see the cards in person in order to offer a price.

Condition is crucial. Ideally, a card will still have its original gloss, sharp corners and no creases, says Ron Sabino of Ron's Collectors World in Annandale, Va. Cards in poor condition fetch far less. For example, a card that was brought into AJ's Sports Stop in Vienna, Va., might have been worth $5,000, says co-owner Rick Lucian, but a hole in the middle of it decreased its value to about $200.

Although experts say the value of vintage cards has stayed steady during the recession, newer cards have decreased in value. Which raises the question: Does it still pay to buy cards for children the year they are born? Absolutely, says Sabino, who told his brother to buy a $50 set for his daughter when she was born in 1972. Today, he says, that untouched set is worth about $2,000.

Finding a second home for used books

By TERRI SAPIENZA
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

An online option for used books is Powell's Books (www.powells.com). Based in Portland, Ore., the bookseller will buy just about any title, and the people there make the process easy: Type in a book's ISBN number (usually on the back cover), and they'll tell you if it's a title they need and how much they will pay for it. Expect $1 or $2 for popular fiction paperbacks and $10, $20 or more for specialized academic or technical titles, says Hillary Smith, director of used books. (Powell's will buy textbooks, but they must be the current edition.) Payment is typically issued within one to two weeks through PayPal or through an online credit that can be used at the bookseller's Web site. The bonus: Powell's pays for shipping, too. "Our goal is to keep books circulating," says Smith, "so we want it to be simple."

Auction houses and online sites

By JURA KONCIUS and TERRI SAPIENZA
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

The auction Web site eBay (www.ebay.com) has a national and international audience, so it's possible that your listing will be viewed by millions each day. You'll pay a fee to list and another once an item is sold. Selling larger items, such as furniture, in such a far-flung venue can be difficult because of shipping, so eBay is probably better for smaller household items, clothing and collectibles.

In most cases, Craigslist (www.craigslist.org) is a local outlet, which makes it more suitable for selling bulkier items such as sofas and dining tables. Because the transaction takes place in person, the buyer typically picks up and transports the item. Listings are free and easy to set up: Upload a picture of your item, set a price and write a short description. Prospective buyers will e-mail you if they are interested.

Local auction houses are good places to sell a large variety of residential furnishings, household items and vintage collectibles. They are also great sources of information about what you own. If you decide to sell something at auction, you'll pay the auction house a commission based on the selling price of the item.

NBC ending Leno's nightly prime-time show

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—NBC said Sunday it decided to pull the plug on the Jay Leno experiment when some affiliate stations considered dropping the nightly prime-time show, and the network is waiting to hear if Leno and "Tonight" host Conan O'Brien accept its new late-night TV plans.

"The Jay Leno Show," which airs at 10 p.m. EST, will end with the Feb. 12 beginning of the Winter Olympics, said NBC Universal Television Entertainment Chairman Jeff Gaspin. Leno would return to his former 11:35 p.m. slot after the Olympics ended under the network's new plan, which also calls for O'Brien to retain his job with "Tonight" but at the later hour of 12:05 a.m. EST.

Jimmy Fallon and his "Late Night" would be pushed a half-hour later as well, to 1:05 a.m. EST.

"My goal is to keep Jay, Conan and Jimmy as our late-night lineup," Gaspin said, adding later that they "have the weekend to think about it" and discussions with them will resume Monday.

NBC had moved Leno to prime-time last year in order to keep him from leaving the company and keep a promise it had made to give O'Brien the "Tonight" show. The change was one of the most dramatic in prime-time television in a generation. It was also a roll of the dice at a time NBC was suffering in prime-time. It didn't even last six months.

AP

In this combo made from file photos, NBC talk show personalities, from left, Jay Leno, Conan O'Brien, and Jimmy Fallon are shown.

Gaspin said the new proposal gives Leno what's important to him—telling jokes at a later hour—and O'Brien his top priority, retaining "Tonight."

"I hope and expect that before the Olympics begin, we'll have everything set. I can't imagine we won't have everything in place before then," Gaspin told a meeting of the Television Critics Association.

Gaspin said that despite lower ratings for NBC at 10 p.m. compared to last year, the network was making money off the show.

But affiliates were upset that it was leading fewer viewers into their late news programs, costing them significant advertising revenue. Some affiliates told NBC in December they would go public soon about their complaints if a change wasn't made, or even take Leno's show off the air.

Gaspin said about one-third of the affiliates were really hurt by the Leno show, although he wasn't clear on how many said they might pre-empt his show.

"I asked them (the affiliates) how many are they talking about, because I could have lived with one or two. But I got the sense that it was more than one or two," he said.

Michael Fiorile, chairman of the NBC Affiliate Board, said it was a great move for NBC stations, the networks and viewers.

"We admire their willingness to innovate, and their willingness to change course when it didn't work for us," Fiorile said.

Gaspin said he pondered combinations of possible schedule changes before the holidays and then called his boss, NBC Universal Chairman Jeff Zucker, for approval to act.

"I don't want to wait anymore. Now is the time," Gaspin recounted telling Zucker.

Both Leno and O'Brien made comedic hay out of the issue last week. Leno joked in his monologue that NBC was working on a solution in which all parties would be treated unfairly, while O'Brien wisecracked that he and Leno would be thrown by the network into a pit to fight and "the one that crawls out gets to leave NBC."

Gaspin said he's "perfectly fine" with their on-air remarks "if that's how they blow off steam and that's how they're comfortable."

NBC's "Saturday Night Live" and its "Weekend Update" with Seth Meyers also got into the act.

"It was reported Thursday that in the wake of poor ratings for `The Jay Leno Show,' NBC will move his show back to the 11:35 time slot, and then start Conan O'Brien's `Tonight Show' at midnight—though it's a little weird to start the `Tonight Show' at a time when it's no longer tonight," Meyers said Saturday.

Asked if O'Brien and Fallon expressed anger at his proposal, Gaspin said both men were professional and understanding when they talked. "Beyond that, it was a private conversation," Gaspin said.

O'Brien reportedly has a contract that guarantees him a multimillion-dollar payment if "Tonight" is moved later than 12:05 a.m. EST.

But Gaspin, asked if a contractual penalty weighed into the decision to bump O'Brien's show a half-hour rather than a full hour, replied, "No, not at all."

As for reports that Fox may be considering courting O'Brien for a late-night program, Gaspin repeated his desire to keep him, Leno and Fallon at NBC.

The decision to shift Leno will leave a gaping hole in NBC's prime-time schedule, at a time the network is already struggling. A mix of reality programming, "Dateline NBC" and at least two hours of scripted shows will be added to fill in the five hours taken up by Leno's prime-time show each week.

Crow tries to ride to rescue of wild horses

RENO, Nev. (AP)—Sheryl Crow has spoken out against the war in Iraq and in support of embryonic stem-cell research and efforts to combat global warming. Now, she's trying to ride to the rescue of thousands of wild horses that roam the West.

After campaigning for President Barack Obama in 2008, the Grammy-winning singer has become a leading critic of his administration's plans to remove as many as 25,000 mustangs from the range and ship them to pastures in the Midwest and East.

Since coming out in favor of a moratorium on government roundups of mustangs in November, Crow has lobbied Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, dropped off books and DVDs about wild horses for Obama at the White House and appeared in a video produced by equine activists.

To no avail, she also called on the president to halt a roundup of about 2,500 mustangs in Nevada, which began late last month as part of the administration's strategy to remove thousands of mustangs from the range.

"My main concern is that horse numbers not be dwindled down to where they can become extinct," she said, fearing the roundups are leaving mustang herds with too few breeding horses.

The government says the number of wild horses and burros on public lands in the West stands at nearly 37,000, about half of them in Nevada. It believes the number that can be supported on the range is about 26,600.

An additional 34,000 wild horses already live away from the range in federal-run corrals and pastures. Those are nearly full at a growing cost.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Crow said the romantic symbols of the American West are being sacrificed, in part, because of ranchers' drive for land. She disputed the government's position that booming mustang numbers are threatening the horses with starvation, and harming arid rangelands and native wildlife.

"I think there has to be a better way than taking them away from their native lands," she said by phone from New York. "I feel so passionate about the issue because wild horses are one of the last remaining ties to the land as it was and our history in America."

The 47-year-old rocker became acquainted with the issue when she rode an adopted wild horse named Smokey in Colorado's Sangre de Cristo Mountains in July 2006, several months after she and cycling champ Lance Armstrong broke off their engagement.

AP

In this photo taken in 2006 and provided by the Cloud Foundation, Sheryl Crow, left and Ginger Kathrens are shown riding mustangs in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in Colorado.

Crow was joined on rides there by friends, including Ginger Kathrens, executive director of the horse-advocacy group Cloud Foundation based in Colorado Springs, Colo. Kathrens is an Emmy-winning documentary filmmaker who has produced PBS programs on a wild stallion named Cloud.

"Sheryl fell in love with the mustangs," Kathrens recalled. "We sat and talked about how we were losing the mustangs (to government roundups). She asked, `What can I do to help?"

Kathrens credited Crow for "jump-starting" the movement for a roundup moratorium and bringing widespread media attention to the issue. Nearly 150 organizations have endorsed the request. "Sheryl is a big star and when she says this is something we should be doing the media perks up," Kathrens said.

Since the rides in the Sangre de Cristos, Crow has adopted a wild mustang named Colorado. She has 20 other horses on her ranch near Nashville, Tenn.

"I was the kid who asked for a horse every year, but we didn't have the backyard for one," the Kennett, Mo., native said. "Now, I ride every day I'm at the ranch. It's a very spiritual connection riding a horse."

Salazar said Crow's passion for horses came across in a phone conversation last month, which he initiated at the urging of his staff after she called for the moratorium. "I told her we didn't know we had the right solution here, but it was the solution we were offering and if there were other ideas we would be happy to entertain those ideas," he said.

Crow said she was pleased that Salazar pledged to open lines of communication with equine activists, but disappointed he ignored her plea to halt the roundups. While she will continue to press for the moratorium, she has no plans to talk to Obama. "He has enough on his plate," she said.

Meanwhile, there are other celebrities pushing the cause, including Willie Nelson, Lily Tomlin, Bill Maher and Ed Harris.

Ron Cerri of the Rebel Creek Ranch near Orovada, Nev., said Crow and the other celebrities are "outsiders" who are unfamiliar with problems caused by the mustangs. He supports the administration's plan, saying the horses are hurting the range, native wildlife and livestock because they can double in population every four years.

"It's not only about the health of the range and the resources, but the health of the horse herds," said Cerri, who is president of the Nevada Cattlemen's Association. "It disappoints me it's not a consideration to them. It's an emotional issue to them."

RARE NICKEL AP

This image provided by Heritage Auctions shows a rare 1913-dated U.S. Liberty Head nickel that was prominently featured in a 1973 episode of the TV series, "Hawaii Five-O," was purchased for $3,737,500 in a public auction conducted in Orlando, Florida by Heritage Auctions Thursday night, Jan. 7, 2010. Only five such coins are known of that specific date and design.

'Avatar' remains in orbit with $48.5M weekend

LOS ANGELES (AP)—James Cameron's "Avatar" continues to race up the box office charts, remaining No. 1 domestically for the fourth straight weekend with $48.5 million and placing second among all-time top-grossing films worldwide.

The science-fiction saga from 20th Century Fox added $143 million overseas to raise its international haul to $906 million. With $429 million domestically, "Avatar" has pulled in $1.34 billion worldwide, behind only Cameron's "Titanic," which took in $1.8 billion.

In just 24 days, "Avatar" shot past the $402.1 million domestic total of "Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen" to become the No. 1 release of 2009. Cameron's tale of humans and aliens in conflict on a distant world now stands at No. 6 on the all-time domestic chart.

MARK FELLMAN/TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX/MCT

As an epic battle approaches, Jake (Sam Worthington, left), Grace (Sigourney Weaver), Trudy (Michelle Rodriguez) and Norm (Joel David Moore) plan their next move in "Avatar."

The film has just over $100 million to go to pass the No. 2 domestic hit, "The Dark Knight" at $533.3 million.

"I think we'll get there very soon," said Bert Livingston, 20th Century Fox distribution executive. "I believe anything is possible with this picture. Nothing would surprise me. There's a still a long way to go, and it's going to keep on playing and playing."

The No. 2 and No. 3 box office draws remained unchanged from the previous weekend, with the Warner Bros. hit "Sherlock Holmes" in second place at $16.6 million and 20th Century Fox's "Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel" in third at $16.3 million. "Sherlock Holmes" raised its domestic take to $165.2 million, and "Alvin and the Chipmunks" lifted its total to $178.2 million.

Among new movies, Lionsgate's vampire thriller "Daybreakers" had the best premiere, coming in at No. 4 with $15 million. "Daybreakers" stars Ethan Hawke as a reluctant vampire racing to find a substitute for human blood in a world overrun by the undead in the near future.

Universal's romantic comedy "Leap Year" opened at No. 5 with $9.2 million. The movie stars Amy Adams as a woman who finds love in an unexpected place as she chases across Ireland to propose to her boyfriend.

The Weinstein Co. comedy "Youth in Revolt," debuted at No. 9 with $7 million. The film features Michael Cera as a teen going to extremes to win the heart of his dream girl.

"Avatar" had the best fourth weekend ever for a film, easily surpassing the previous high of $28.7 million for "Titanic," which dominated the box office for nearly four months.

The coming weekend likely will be another big one for "Avatar," with many people off next Monday for Martin Luther King Day.

Hollywood's box office roll has lingered in 2010. Overall domestic revenues came in at $156 million, up 6.6 percent from the same weekend last year, when "Gran Torino" led with $29.5 million, according to box office tracker Hollywood.com.

It was the eight-straight weekend of rising ticket sales.

1. ***"Avatar,"*** $48.5 million.
2. ***"Sherlock Holmes,"*** $16.6 million.
3. ***"Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel,"*** $16.3 million.
4. ***"Daybreakers,"*** $15 million.
5. ***"It's Complicated,"*** $11 million.
6. ***"Leap Year,"*** $9.2 million.
7. ***"The Blind Side,"*** $7.8 million.
8. "Up in the Air," $7.1 million. 9. "Youth in Revolt," $7 million.
10. ***"The Princess and the Frog,"*** $4.7 million.

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Daybreakers
Friday 4:10 7:30 9:50
Saturday 1:20 4:10 7:30 9:50
Sunday 1:20 4:10 7:30
Mon thru Thurs 4:10 7:30
Ethan Hawke, William Dafoe
Horror • Rated R
Synopsis
Fresh off the success of their inventive take on the zombie genre, Undead masterminds Michael and Peter Spierig direct Ethan Hawke in an ambitious tale of a futuristic Earth populated entirely by vampires, and the efforts made by the creatures to ensure that their food supply doesn't run out as humankind is faced with extinction. The year is 2017, and a vampire plague has turned most of the planet's human population into bloodsucking ghouls.

Youth in Revolt
Friday 4:00 7:00 9:45
Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:45
Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:00
Mon thru Thurs 4:00 7:00
M. Emmet Walsh, Fred Willard
Comedy • Rated R
Synopsis
Superbad's Michael Cera discovers a vacation romance in Youth in Revolt, a teen comedy from Charlie Bartlett's screenwriter, Gustin Nash, and director Miguel Arteta (Chuck & Buck). The film is an adaptation of C.D. Payne's first book in a series of best-selling satirical novels starring Nick Twisp, a sexually charged 14-year-old whose intelligence and hormones get him into all sorts of adventures.

★ ★ ★

Sherlock Holmes
Friday 4:05 7:05 9:55
Saturday 1:05 4:05 7:05 9:55
Sunday 1:05 4:05 7:05
Mon thru Thurs 4:05 7:05
Robert Downey, Jr., Jude Law
Action, Mystery • Rated PG 13
Synopsis
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famous super-sleuth, Sherlock Holmes, gets an update with this adaptation of Lionel Wigram's comic book series by writer/director Guy Ritchie (RocknRolla) starting Robert Downey Jr. as the titular detective, with Jude Law stepping into the shoes of his sidekick, Dr. Watson. Heading up the rest of the cast are RocknRolla's Mark Strong as the film's villain, Blackwood, and Rachel McAdams portraying the love interest, Irene Adler.

It's Complicated
Friday 4:20 7:10 9:40
Saturday 1:30 4:20 7:10 9:40
Sunday 1:30 4:20 7:10
Mon thru Thurs 4:20 7:10
Meryl Streep, Alec Baldwin
Comedy • Rated R

Avatar
Friday 3:55 6:55 10:00
Saturday 12:50 3:55 6:55 10:00
Sunday 12:50 3:55 6:55
Mon thru Thurs 3:55 6:55
Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana
Science Fiction • Rated PG 13

Alvin & The Chipmunks: The Sqeakquel
Friday 4:15 7:25 9:30
Saturday 1:15 4:15 7:25 9:30
Sunday 1:15 4:15 7:25
Mon thru Thurs 4:15 7:25
Justin Long, Matthew Gray Gubler
Children, Family • Rated PG

The Princess And The Frog
Friday 4:30 7:20 9:35
Saturday 1:10 4:30 7:20 9:35
Sunday 1:10 4:30 7:20
Mon thru Thurs 4:30 7:20
Anika Noni Rose, John Goodman
Comedy, Family • Rated G

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Halle Berry and boyfriend bypass airport line

MONTREAL (AP)—Canadian police said Friday that it was wrong for one of their officers to whisk Halle Berry, her model boyfriend and baby through airport security at Montreal's Trudeau airport.

A constable at the airport decided to let the couple pass a long line after a spur-of-the-moment request on Monday by Gabriel Aubry, a Quebec model who is Berry's boyfriend and father of her 22-month-old daughter, Nahla.

"The (boyfriend) of Ms. Berry asked if they could go faster through the line because they were late and they had the baby," said Insp. Jimmy Cacchione, who heads the 36-member unit that patrols the Montreal airport.

"The officer took the personal initiative to allow them to go through the line faster, but that's not something the Montreal police supports."

An embarrassed Montreal police force issued a directive to its officers Friday, urging them to avoid a repeat of the episode.

The officer involved will not be reprimanded and the police airport unit will institute stricter rules for the future, Cacchione added.

Berry's agent Toni Howard was not immediately available for comment.

Journalist Marieve Paradis said she spotted the actress and her family bypassing a lengthy security lineup while other passengers waited for hours to get to U.S. Customs.

"It shocked me that we were waiting in line, and there were other babies and other children," Paradis said from Los Angeles, where she lives.

"Monday was chaotic at the airport, people were anxious and everyone was scared to miss their flights."

Blagojevich: 'I'm blacker than Barack Obama'

CHICAGO (AP)—Ousted Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich says he's "blacker than Barack Obama" and tells Esquire magazine that he was a real person in a political arena dominated by phonies.

Blagojevich, referring to the president as "this guy," says Obama was elected based simply on hope.

"What the (expletive)? Everything he's saying's on the teleprompter," Blagojevich told the magazine for a story in its February issue, which hits newsstands Jan. 19.

"I'm blacker than Barack Obama. I shined shoes. I grew up in a five-room apartment. My father had a little laundromat in a black community not far from where we lived," Blagojevich said. "I saw it all growing up."

The White House refused to comment.

AP

In this April 21, 2009, file photo, ousted Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich is seen leaving federal court in Chicago.

The twice-elected Democrat was impeached and removed from office last year after federal prosecutors arrested him on corruption charges that included trying to sell Obama's old U.S. Senate seat. He has pleaded not guilty.

Blagojevich continues to accuse prosecutors of persecuting him for routine political deals.

One of those deals, he said, was the possibility of naming Attorney General Lisa Madigan to Obama's Senate seat in exchange for cooperation on important programs from her powerful father, Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan.

He used an infamously coarse word to refer to the attorney general.

"If I can get this, how much do I love the people of Illinois to make that (expletive) senator?'" Blagojevich said.

Blagojevich is appearing on NBC's "Celebrity Apprentice" this spring and his trial is expected to start later this year.

Tobey Maguire talks 'Spider-Man' production delay

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Tobey Maguire doesn't think "Spider-Man 4" has become a tangled mess.

The 34-year-old star of the web-slinging superhero franchise said preproduction snags aren't dampening his mood about the fourth installment. The next "Spider-Man" film had been scheduled to swing into theaters May 6, 2011, but that seems unlikely now that "Thor," another big-screen Marvel superhero adaptation, has hammered out the same release date.

"Like anything, it's a process," Maguire said Thursday. "We're just in the midst of the process. We have a lot of great stuff in terms of story and script. We're just trying to dial it in and get it ready as quickly as possible. Of course, these movies are a very big undertaking and take a lot more time than a drama or something more straightforward."

Marvel Studios spokesman Paul Pflug declined to comment on reports that production had stalled amid script revisions.

AP

Actor Tobey Maguire poses for a photo in Beverly Hills, Calif. on Thursday, Jan. 7, 2010. Maguire has being in all three Spider-Man movies.

Maguire, who has played Peter Parker in all three films, said the plan is to still release the movie in 2011, but wasn't more specific about the date. Whatever happens, he's enthusiastic about Spidey's future.

"Not only do I have specific ideas, but the ideas are evolving on the page," he said. "It's all happening right now. It's all sort of coming together. It's very exciting to me. I think the evolution of the character is really exciting, to be rooted in the history of what we've done already and to have a continuity, yet have a progression or evolution."

After glowing reaction to the first two chapters, critical response to 2007's "Spider-Man 3" was so-so. Director Sam Raimi was undecided about returning to the franchise after the third movie, but said at the Cannes International Film Festival last year that he didn't like "thinking about a world where somebody else was making the Peter Parker story."

AP

This Sept. 13, 2009, file photo shows actress Stephanie Pratt arriving at the MTV Video Music Awards in New York.

Probation for 'Hills' Pratt

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Court records show Stephanie Pratt, an actress on MTV's "The Hills," will serve three years of informal probation after pleading no contest to a lesser charge in a drunken driving case.

Pratt pleaded no contest to a charge of exhibition of speed in a Los Angeles court Thursday. She was arrested in October in Hollywood and charged with drunken driving.

Pratt's attorney, Jon Artz, says the plea deal was reached because there was no evidence Pratt was driving impaired. Artz says he thinks it's a fair resolution to the case and Pratt has learned a "valuable lesson" about the dangers of drinking and driving.

The records show Pratt has agreed to attend Alcoholics Anonymous classes as part of the plea agreement.

The sentence was first reported by People.com.

US court rules in favor of octuplets mom Suleman

SANTA ANA, California (AP)—A California appeals court ruled in favor of octuplets mother Nadya Suleman Friday, denying a call for an independent guardian to monitor her children's finances.

The 4th District Court of Appeal in Santa Ana called the petition an "unprecedented, meritless effort by a stranger" and directed an Orange County probate court to vacate its order for an investigation into the family's finances.

Paul Petersen, an advocate for children in the entertainment industry, argued that Suleman's children were vulnerable and that an independent guardian should be appointed to look after their financial interests.

The appeals court said the probate judge erred because Petersen failed to show that Suleman was engaging in financial misconduct.

Suleman gave birth to octuplets on Jan. 26, 2009. The medical curiosity of their delivery turned to public outrage when it was learned that the single, unemployed mother had been caring for her six other children with the help of food stamps and Social Security disability payments for three of the youngsters.

Suleman said previously that some of the disability money was spent on in vitro fertilizations, which was used for all 14 of her children.

Howie Mandel joins NBC's 'America's Got Talent'

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—Howie Mandel is replacing David Hasselhoff as one of the judges on NBC's "America's Got Talent."

NBC executives confirmed the move Sunday. Mandel, who has been host of NBC's "Deal or No Deal," will be teamed with returning hosts Sharon Osbourne and Piers Morgan.

"America's Got Talent" is one of the most popular series on TV in the summertime.

Townsend replaced in Marvel Comics tale 'Thor'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Stuart Townsend has departed Marvel Comics' movie adaptation of "Thor" because of creative differences, according to sources close to the production.

Townsend had been cast as Fandral, an ally of Norse god Thor. He was replaced by Joshua Dallas, according to the two sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak on the record.

The cast change came as production was about to begin. Shooting starts Monday on the movie directed by Kenneth Branagh.

Irish actor Townsend, 37, best known as the boyfriend of Academy Award winner Charlize Theron, starred in "Queen of the Damned." He had been cast as Aragorn in "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy but was replaced at the last minute by Viggo Mortensen.

Dallas, an American actor who is a relative newcomer, appears in George Lucas' upcoming Tuskagee Airmen drama "Red Tails."

"Thor" stars Chris Hemsworth in the title role, a warrior cast down to Earth to live among mortals as punishment for his reckless actions, which rekindled an ancient war in the realm of Asgard. Thor's troubles continue after dark forces of Asgard are dispatched to invade Earth.

The movie co-stars Natalie Portman, Anthony Hopkins, Renee Russo and Tom Hiddleston. Kenneth Branagh is directing.

AP

In this Sept. 17, 2008 photo, writer-director Stuart Townsend attends a Film Society hosted screening of 'Battle In Seattle' at the Tribeca Hotel in New York.

"Thor" had been scheduled for release May 20, 2011, but Marvel has just moved it up to May 6, 2011.

Jump to conclusions could land neighbor in hot water

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I'm writing about "Not Nosy, Just Concerned" (Nov. 13), the neighbor who suspects the woman she sees entering "John" and "Marcia's" house is having an affair with John while Marcia sleeps. There is another scenario to consider, and it is, perhaps, the biggest reason "Nosy" should keep hers out of it. It is entirely possible that Marcia is fully aware and willingly participating in the after-hours visits of the "tart."

I am happily married now, but when I was single, I was an after-dark visitor to a well-to-do, (still) happily married couple in an unsuspecting affluent suburban neighborhood. We were all happy with the arrangement, and even joked with each other about what the neighbors would think if they only knew. "Nosy" may get the surprise of her life if she ignores your advice and shares her "knowledge" with Marcia. Things aren't always as they appear.

HAPPY THIRD WHEEL

DEAR HAPPY: That's true. And you were by no means the only reader who suggested that scenario. However, many others were quick to offer me some neighborly advice. Read on:

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: You were off-base in your reply to that lady. She wanted to know how to tell the woman of the house her husband was up to no good. You advised her to mind her own business. You should have told her to send the woman a letter.

If it turns out the visitor is a relative, they can have a good laugh over it and she won't have messed up her friendship with the couple. If it turns out she's right, then Marcia will know to get herself tested for an STD, which John may have given her. And if he hasn't given her one yet, it could stop her from getting one. STDs can kill. Telling the neighbor to butt out was just plain dumb.

FREDA IN FLORIDA

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: You are out of touch if you don't think a man will have sex in the same house in which his wife is sleeping. My sister awoke one morning to find her (now ex) husband having sex with their houseguest in the bathroom! And about 15 years ago, a friend of mine caught her husband in the basement with another woman. She and their two children had been upstairs sleeping.

Open your eyes, Abby. Why would a relative come in the middle of the night and park a block away?

DIANE IN MINNESOTA

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My mom had the same suspicion years ago. Her neighbor lady's husband would leave for work and shortly after his departure a man next door would walk over to her house. He'd go through the back gate, into her home, stay awhile and then walk back to his house. After getting to know them, Mom discovered that the woman and her visitor were brother and sister and enjoyed drinking their morning coffee together.

NOSY NO MORE

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I wish a nosy neighbor had told me when my fiance was cheating on me. After I found out, several people admitted they had suspected the woman who had been coming around when I was visiting my parents was the "other woman," but they didn't want to seem intrusive.

While all of this was going on, I was pregnant with our second child. I learned what was happening when the baby was 3 months old. The woman was someone I considered a friend. I felt betrayed. Abby, "Nosy" should send her neighbor an anonymous note.

SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN THERE

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Several years ago my dad came to San Francisco to attend a CPA convention. Because my stepmom, "Ann," couldn't be there, Dad invited me to the Saturday night dinner. I was in my early 20s and working as a fashion model, so I decided to dress to kill.

Even though Dad introduced me as his daughter, several of the wives were suspicious. One of them took a picture of us and showed it to Ann. The look on her face was priceless when my stepmom said, "Isn't 'Jim's' daughter beautiful? I'm so glad she could be there." The three of us have laughed about it for years.

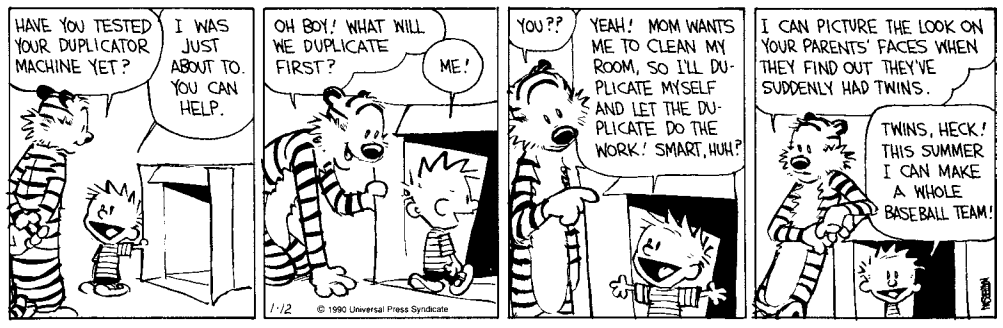
NORMA IN SAN MATEO, CALIF.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

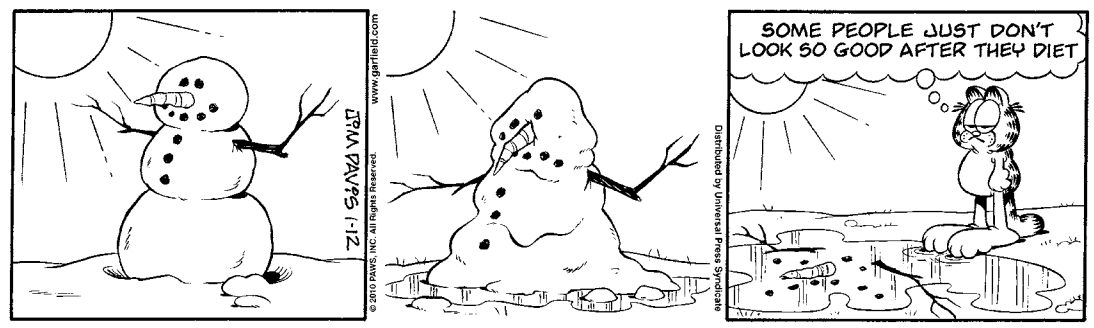
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


HAVE YOU TESTED YOUR DUPLICATOR MACHINE YET?
I WAS JUST ABOUT TO. YOU CAN HELP.
OH BOY! WHAT WILL WE DUPLICATE FIRST?
ME!
1-12
© 1990 Universal Press Syndicate
YOU??
YEAH! MOM WANTS ME TO CLEAN MY ROOM, SO I'LL DUPLICATE MYSELF AND LET THE DUPLICATE DO THE WORK! SMART, HUH?
I CAN PICTURE THE LOOK ON YOUR PARENTS' FACES WHEN THEY FIND OUT THEY'VE SUDDENLY HAD TWINS.
TWINS, HECK! THIS SUMMER I CAN MAKE A WHOLE BASEBALL TEAM!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis


JIM DAVIS 1-12
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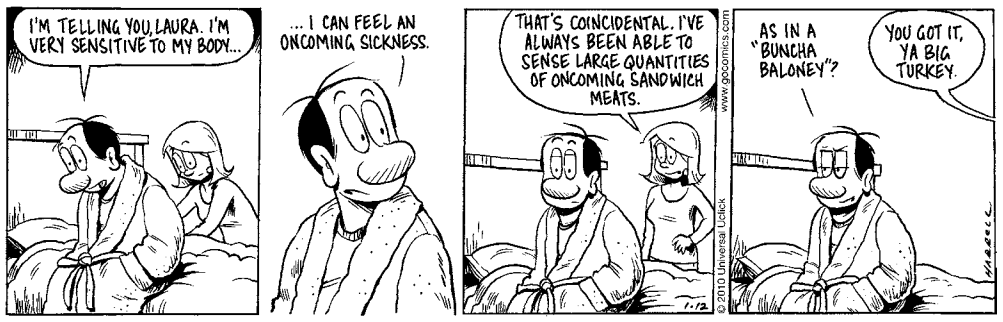
SOME PEOPLE JUST DON'T LOOK SO GOOD AFTER THEY DIET
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


I'M TELLING YOU, LAURA. I'M VERY SENSITIVE TO MY BODY...
... I CAN FEEL AN ONCOMING SICKNESS.
THAT'S COINCIDENTAL. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO SENSE LARGE QUANTITIES OF ONCOMING SANDWICH MEATS.
AS IN A "BUNCHA BALONEY"?
YOU GOT IT, YA BIG TURKEY.
© 2010 Universal Uclick
www.gocomics.com

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

ENO, I FEEL I'VE BEEN SEEING TOO MUCH OF YOU.
SO YOU'RE BREAKING UP WITH ME?
NO. I WANT YOU TO WEAR THIS PAPER BAG OVER YOUR HEAD.
1-12-10
www.gocomics.com
Glenn McCoy
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CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 — mater
5 Thither
8 Astronomical bear
12 Spring wind?
13 Praise in verse
14 Bosc, e.g.
15 Color quality
16 "A Streetcar Named Desire" surname
18 Captain
20 Gave as an example
21 Fellows
22 Fellows
23 Lifting apparatus
26 Soaking in the sun
30 Feedbag morsel
31 "— the ramparts ..."
32 Compete
33 "Tobacco Road" author Caldwell
36 Bloodhound's clue
38 Suffix with robot
39 Dead heat
40 Supermarket section
43 Providing traction
47 Like beauty, they say
49 Rescue
50 Baserunner's goal
51 Bikini half
52 Verve
53 Oklahoma city
54 Dickens pseudonym
55 Transmitted

DOWN
1 Performances
2 Appearance
3 Revealing skirt
4 Hebrew letters
5 Burdens for oxen
6 Stench
7 Fresh
8 Telecom channel to a satellite
9 Repose
10 Benefit
11 Saharan
17 "Bullets" at the poker table
19 Favorite
22 Scratch
23 Weeding tool
24 Rowing tool
25 "Monty Python" opener
26 Spelling contest
27 "— got it!"
28 Zero
29 Solidify
31 Switch positions
34 Baked, as pottery
35 On the rocks
36 Transgression
37 Disarrays
39 November birthstone
40 Arthur of tennis
41 Object of worship (Var.)
42 California valley
43 Pianist Peter
44 Hardy cabbage
45 Terrible guy?
46 Fender bender
48 Recede

Solution time: 21 mins.

A	V	E	C	■	T	S	P	■	A	B	E	D
D	I	V	A	■	R	U	E	■	C	A	R	E
A	V	I	V	■	A	P	P	L	E	P	I	E
M	A	L	I	B	U	■	S	E	T	T	E	R
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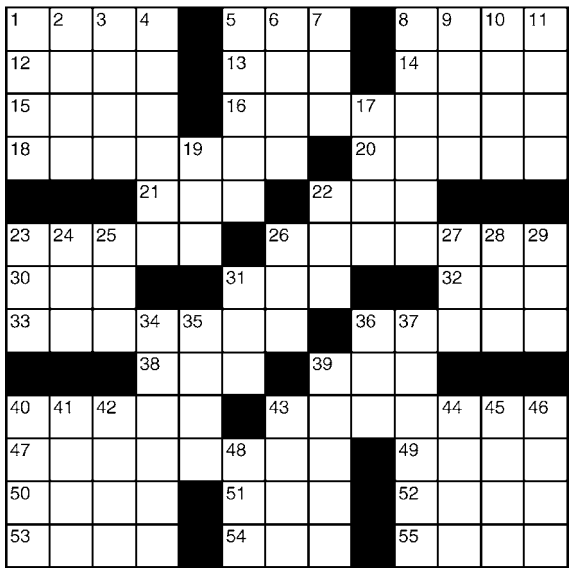
A	P	P	R	O	A	C	H	■	C	Z	A	R
L	E	A	■	S	T	O	O	P	■	E	N	E
P	A	N	T	■	A	P	P	E	N	D	I	X
■	■	P	H	I	■	E	E	R	O	■	■	■
L	A	I	R	D	S	■	L	I	G	H	T	S
A	P	P	O	S	I	T	E	■	O	A	H	U
K	E	E	N	■	L	I	S	■	O	T	I	C
E	S	S	E	■	O	P	S	■	D	E	S	K

Yesterday's answer 1-12



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Andy Lawrence, 22; Melanie Chisholm, 36; Rob Zombie, 45; Rush Limbaugh, 59

Happy Birthday: Change is upon you but only if you incorporate things you used to do with things you want to do in the future. You cannot hide from responsibilities, so do your best to get them out of the way or at least control what is going on around you. Restrictions due to poor management or dealings with institutions can be expected. Your numbers are 7, 13, 22, 26, 39, 43, 47

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): You may have to put more effort and a little more cash into something you believe in if you want to get a decent return. Trust in your talent and your connections to pull off a difficult task. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You may think you have a perfect plan but something is likely to be missing that can cost you. Focus on detail and accuracy. An impulsive move will cost you in ways you never imagined. Don't venture too far off track. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Someone will be quite willing to partner with you in order to reach a common goal. Negotiate your position and you will find a way to satisfy everyone involved. An emotional setback must be avoided. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Make travel plans if it will help open doors leading to a better position or new skills. You can develop a good personal or professional relationship with someone by being upfront and honest concerning your expectations. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): An investment you have can pay off, giving you greater maneuverability and contributing to a new beginning. Someone involved will bring up issues that you should look at before you move forward. With all the facts, you can make positive changes. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Make your work fun and you will not only enjoy what you do but you will stand a much greater chance at turning what you do into a successful enterprise. Don't let a personal problem stand in your way. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): You'll find other people's ideas interesting but don't be too quick to believe what's being offered. The lazy way out will cost you personally and financially. Don't let love confuse you or cause you to make a poor decision. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): A change of location will enable you greater mobility for travel, learning and applying what you know to something that can be quite lucrative. A lifestyle change will do more than just alter your direction—it will bring you clarity and peace of mind. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Put a little cash behind your ideas, plans or projects. Waiting around for someone else to pick up the slack will lead to lost control. Either you make a personal move or someone will force you to make one. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Get back to the people, places and activities that you enjoy the most. Connect with someone from your past. You can gain power and recognition if you stand up for your rights and follow your heart. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): A sudden change in the way someone from your past treats you will enable you to plan for a brighter future. A passionate approach to a project you believe in will help you convince others to pitch in and join your cause. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Move forward with any project you've started, regardless of the alterations someone makes. Stick to your own plan and prepare to continue down the path alone if necessary. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are conscientious, intent on doing what's right and willing to do whatever it takes to follow a path that leads to bigger and better opportunities.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	4			8			9	
2			6		3	1		5
	7	5	9			2		
	5					6	2	
8								4
	6	3					1	
		6			9	4	7	
4		9	7		5			1
	2			6			3	

Difficulty Level ★★ 1/12

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

8	5	3	9	1	7	6	4	2
6	4	9	8	5	2	3	7	1
7	1	2	6	4	3	5	8	9
9	6	4	2	7	5	8	1	3
5	7	1	3	8	4	9	2	6
2	3	8	1	6	9	7	5	4
1	9	5	4	3	8	2	6	7
3	8	6	7	2	1	4	9	5
4	2	7	5	9	6	1	3	8

Difficulty Level ★ 1/11

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

EXERCISE BALLS **Solution: 7 letters**

I	N	T	E	N	S	I	T	Y	I	L	A	R	G	E
N	S	P	E	R	C	T	L	Y	N	I	V	N	F	N
I	H	S	U	P	O	R	H	O	M	E	Z	I	S	O
A	G	(L)	E	S	O	P	U	G	I	M	P	A	C	T
R	I	(L)	R	T	E	C	H	N	I	Q	U	E	S	S
T	H	(O)	H	R	D	E	R	O	C	L	L	T	D	E
N	T	(R)	E	E	T	R	E	N	D	H	L	N	S	I
E	N	O	I	T	A	T	I	L	I	B	A	H	E	R
M	L	L	G	C	A	T	B	L	R	H	M	Y	E	O
P	L	O	H	H	W	O	P	A	L	E	S	O	N	S
I	E	C	T	I	U	I	N	T	T	S	Z	G	K	S
U	A	E	S	N	R	D	E	C	N	A	L	A	B	E
Q	N	T	C	G	Y	M	N	A	S	I	U	M	R	C
E	S	E	N	O	I	T	A	N	I	D	R	O	O	C
S	T	R	O	P	S	L	A	N	I	M	O	D	B	A

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Abdominals, Accessories, Balance, Bounce, Brand, Color, Coordination, Core, Craze, Crunch, Drills, Equipment, Grip, Gymnasium, Hands, Height, Home, Impact, Intensity, Knees, Large, Lean, Light, Pose, Push, Rehabilitation, Reps, Roll, Size, Small, Sports, Stretching, Tall, Techniques, Thighs, Tone, Torso, Train, Trend, Tummy, Twists, Vinyl, Yoga

Yesterday's Answer: Nutrients

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25
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By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
REPORTER
The fate of the $1.35 million in CNMI special projects funding requested by Del-
egate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) now rests with President Obama, after the conference report on the omnibus Fiscal Year 2010 spending bill cleared the U.S. Senate on Sunday.
Sablan's request for $1.35 million to fund seven programs and projects is contained in the Conference Report on Fiscal Year 2010 Consolidated Appropriations Act, a $447-billion spending measure for
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WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

my TONGUE

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Find today's solution in this section

AP

Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers watches Arizona Cardinals' Karlos Dansby (58) run back a fumble after Rodgers was hit by Michael Adams (27) during overtime of an NFL wild-card playoff football game Sunday, Jan. 10, 2010, in Glendale, Ariz.

Dansby's fumble return in OT gives Cards 51-45 win

GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP)—Old master Kurt Warner and playoff newcomer Aaron Rodgers staged a passing duel to rival any the NFL has seen. And when the highest-scoring postseason game in league history ended abruptly in overtime, Rodgers flung his helmet to the sideline in disgust.

He can blame the Arizona defense for his misery.

Karlos Dansby returned Rodgers' fumble 17 yards for a touchdown to give the Cardinals a 51-45 victory over the Green Bay Packers on Sunday.

Rodgers, intercepted on the game's first play but marvelous after that, was stripped by Michael Adams. The ball careened off Rodgers' foot and into the hands of Dansby, who ran untouched for the score.

"He made a sack, the ball went in the air, I just made a play on the ball," Dansby said.

The reigning NFC champion Cardinals (11-6) rushed the field to celebrate.

"That's probably one of the best games ever played in the playoffs," Cardinals coach Ken Whisenhunt said.

Incredibly, Warner had more touchdown passes (five) than incompletions (four).

"We knew how tough it was going to be on our defense with all the weapons they have offensively and how they've been playing," he said. "It was just one of those games where I felt great. I loved our playing. I felt like I was seeing everything well and it accumulates to 51 points."

Warner, who improved his playoff record to 9-3, finished 29 of 33 for 379 yards with no interceptions. The five TDs matched the 38-year-old's career best.

Rodgers, in his first playoff start, was 28 of 42 for a Packers postseason-record 422 yards and four TDs. All but two of Rodgers' yards came after the first quarter.

"It's clearly one of the toughest losses I've been a part of," Green Bay coach Mike McCarthy said. "I'm very proud of our football team and fight. This is a hard game to swallow."

The previous high for combined points in a postseason game was 95 in Philadelphia's 58-37 win over Detroit on Dec. 30, 1995.

"Whew," Warner said at his postgame news conference, "anybody else tired?"

The NFC West champion Cardinals play at New Orleans on Saturday.

It was the most points scored and allowed by the Packers (11-6) in their storied 41-game playoff history.

Dansby started and ended the game with big plays. He broke up Rodgers' opening pass and Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie intercepted. The next time the Packers got the ball, Dansby stripped Donald Driver and Arizona's Alan Branch recovered.

With Anquan Boldin sidelined with ankle and knee injuries, Warner threw two touchdown passes to Larry Fitzgerald, two to Early Doucet and one to Steve Breaston, who caught seven passes for 125 yards.

The previous playoff game to end on a defensive touchdown was Jan. 4, 2004, when Al Harris returned an interception 52 yards for a touchdown in Green Bay's 33-27 win over Seattle.

Neil Rackers missed a 34-yard field goal at the end of regulation for Arizona.

The teams combined for 1,024 yards. Arizona had 531, including 156 rushing, against a Packers defense ranked No. 2 overall, No. 1 against the run. The 13 touchdowns was an NFL playoff record.

Green Bay entered winners of seven of its last eight, including a 33-7 victory against the Cardinals on the same field a week ago.

But the team with the fewest turnovers in the NFL (16) started the game with two of them and ended it with another.

In between, Green Bay rallied from a 21-point second-half deficit to twice tie the game.

"The game was so back and forth, it was unbelievable," Packers linebacker A.J. Hawk said.

After Rackers missed the field goal, the Packers won the toss. Since Arizona hadn't stopped them since the first half, it didn't look good for the home team.

But on third-and-6 at the Green Bay 24, the 5-foot-8 cornerback Adams came through on a blitz and stripped Rodgers. On a bad bounce the Packers will remember for a long time, the ball caromed off Rodgers' foot and right to Dansby.

"We had the play called earlier, but we missed the sack," Dansby said. "With the game on the line, we called it again. ... See you in New Orleans, baby."

Rodgers said he should have just taken the sack.

"I was trying to unload it," he said. "I should have held on to the ball. I was looking at the front side for Driv (Driver). It looked like he was getting grabbed a bit. Then I was looking for James (Jones) and they were driving in on him as he was running a little in cut, so I kind of pulled the ball back and someone hit my arm."

The Cardinals took the second-half kickoff and drove 80 yards for a touchdown to go up 31-10, Warner throwing 33 yards to Fitzgerald, who has nine TD catches in his five playoff games, at least one in each contest.

But nobody could stop anybody in this one.

After Rodgers' 6-yard pass to Greg Jennings cut the lead to 31-17, the Packers caught Arizona off guard with an onside kick, then drove for another score. Rodgers' 10-yard pass to Jordy Nelson trimmed the deficit to seven.

Arizona got another score on Fitzgerald's diving grab of an 11-yard pass, but the Packers scored two more in a hurry, tying it at 38 on John Kuhn's 1-yard run with 10:57 to play.

Each team scored again, Green Bay tying it at 45 when Rodgers threw 11 yards to Spencer Havner with 1:52 to play.

That was plenty of time for Warner to drive the Cardinals downfield, but Rackers—16 of 17 for the season and 10 of 10 inside 40 yards—booted it well left of the upright.

Green Bay called "tails" and won the toss. Three plays later, it was over.

"Man," Warner said, "what a football game."

Warner took a victory lap around the field, leading some to wonder if all that speculation about his impending retirement was true.

"Everybody relax," he said. "That was my way of saying thanks to the fans because we're not coming back here this year."

As for retirement, Warner said that decision would be made later. He has a year left on his contract.

"I don't think you every want to stay too long, but you never want to go out before it's time," he said. "The hard part is trying to figure that out, but right now it's about another playoff game. It's about New Orleans and then we'll go from there."

Ravens 33, Patriots 14

At Foxborough, Massachusetts, two-time Super Bowl most valuable player Tom Brady threw three interceptions and fumbled the ball away in the New England Patriots' first-round NFL playoff game as the Baltimore Ravens opened a 24-point first-quarter lead en route to a 33-14 victory Sunday.

"We got off to a terrible start in the first quarter and never really got back into the game," Brady said. "Playing the way we played today, we weren't going to beat anybody."

The Patriots have now lost consecutive playoff games for the first time in the Brady era, a decade of dominance that included three Super Bowl titles and a 16-0 record in the 2007 regular season that was tainted only by David Tyree's acrobatic catch in the Super Bowl loss to the New York Giants.

Ray Rice ran 83 yards for a touchdown on Baltimore's first play from scrimmage, and three plays later Terrell Suggs strip-sacked Brady deep in Patriots territory to set up another touchdown that made it 14-0 less than five minutes in.

A perfect 8-0 in the regular season at Gillette Stadium, where Brady had never lost a playoff game, the Patriots heard the hometown fans booing just six minutes in after they went three and out on their second possession and then gave up a 34-yard punt return.

On their next two possessions, Brady threw interceptions that led to 10 more Baltimore points.

Brady was 23 for 42 for 154 yards and two touchdowns. The three interceptions—two of them went off receivers' hands—tied for a career playoff high; the other two times he was picked off three times, the Patriots won.

Brady sustained a season-ending injury in the first quarter of the first game last season, and the Patriots missed the playoffs despite an 11-5 record.

"I'm able to walk off the field—something I didn't do last year. That's a blessing for any player," he said, noting that receiver Wes Welker was hurt in the regular-season finale and was on the sideline on crutches on Sunday.

AP source: Reds reach deal with LHP Chapman

CINCINNATI (AP)—Cuban lefthander Aroldis Chapman has agreed to a deal with the Cincinnati Reds, ending one of the biggest questions in baseball this offseason.

A person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press about the agreement on Sunday, speaking on condition of anonymity because the contract hadn't been finalized. The Reds called a news conference for noon on Monday.

Yahoo! Sports was the first to report the deal.

Chapman gained notoriety during the World Baseball Classic in March, when he pitched well against Australia and badly against Japan. With a 100 mph fastball, he is considered by scouts to be among the top pitching prospects in the world, but there are questions about his readiness for the majors.

Chapman threw a bullpen session for major league teams in Houston last month, and the Toronto Blue Jays, Florida Marlins and Boston Red Sox also were thought to be among his potential suitors.

It's a surprising move for the small-market Reds, who were expected to trim their opening-day payroll from the $71 million it had last season. Cincinnati drew 1.7 million fans during its ninth straight losing season, its smallest attendance since 1986.

The Reds gave third baseman Scott Rolen a two-year contract extension last month that guaranteed him an additional $13 million but converted almost half of his 2010 salary to a deferred signing bonus.

Chapman was a first baseman primarily until he was 15 or 16, when a school pitching coach suggested he convert. By the 2005 season, he was 18 and pitching for Holguin in the Cuban national league.

He defected last July, leaving the Cuban national team after it arrived in the Netherlands for a tournament. He then established residency in Andorra so he could choose his team as a free agent and not be subject to baseball's draft.

Chapman's original representative filed a lawsuit against his current agent in Massachusetts state court last month, claiming Hendricks Sports Management illegally lured him away from Athletes Premier International and agent Edwin Mejia.

The suit accuses Hendricks of tortious interference and unjust enrichment, claiming Athletes Premier "invested substantial time and hundreds of thousands of dollars" on Chapman's behalf to help him defect, establish residency in Andorra and begin negotiating with major league teams.

The Hendricks agency has called the lawsuit "pure fiction and self delusion."

LeBron scores 41 as Cavs hold off Blazers

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—LeBron James had 41 points and 10 rebounds and the Cleveland Cavaliers held off a fourth-quarter Portland rally to beat the Trail Blazers 106-94 on Sunday night.

Shaquille O'Neal had 11 points and 11 rebounds for the Cavaliers, who won their sixth straight against the Blazers.

James, wearing one blue shoe and one orange shoe, was 8 for 8 from the floor for 20 points in the first quarter alone. He finished 13 of 19 from the field and made 12 of 14 free-throw attempts.

Brandon Roy scored 34 points for the Blazers, who trailed by as many as 17 points in the second half but rallied late, closing to 76-74 on two consecutive 3-pointers from Martell Webster and Andre Miller's layup.

Portland didn't get any closer until Roy's 3-pointer with 6:55 left tied it at 87.

After the teams traded free throws, Anderson Varejao hit a layup to give the Cavaliers back the lead at 91-89. Mo William's 3-pointer extended it to 95-89, and after a couple of costly Blazers turnovers, Jawad Williams hit a 3-pointer to stretch it to 98-89 with 2:58 left, and Cleveland led the rest of the way.

The Trail Blazers were hampered without a big man to counter O'Neal. Both Greg Oden and Joel Przybilla sustained season-ending knee injuries. Veteran Juwan Howard has been filling in.

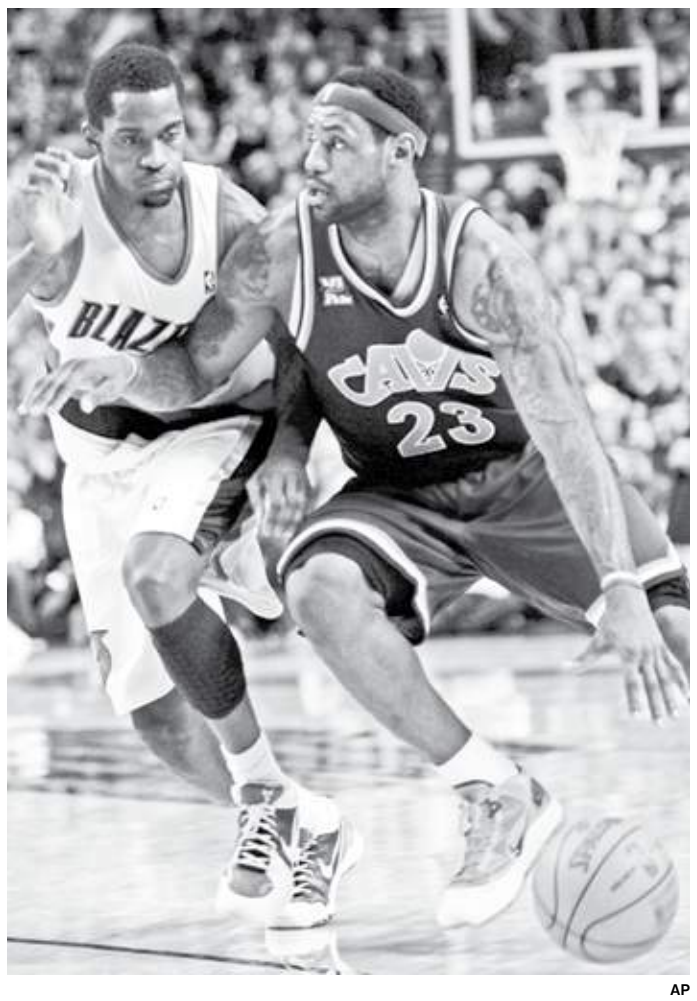
Oden and Przybilla top a long list of injuries Portland is dealing with. Forwards Nicolas Batum (shoulder), Travis Outlaw (left foot) and Rudy Fernandez (back) are all rehabbing.

The Blazers did see the return Sunday night of guard Steve Blake, who was recently hospitalized for pneumonia and missed four games.

But the Blazers had no solution for James. His layup capped a 12-0 Cleveland run in the second quarter that stretched the lead to 46-31, and the Cavaliers led 64-49 at the break. James finished the first half with 31 points—the most points the Blazers have allowed in a half this season.

Portland was coming off an emotional 107-98 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers on Friday night, and fans at the Rose Garden were hopeful. One held a sign reading: "LeBron may be King but we have ROYalty."

The Cavaliers were coming off a 99-97 loss Friday night to the Denver Nuggets, who won despite playing without leading scorer Carmelo Anthony.



AP

Cleveland Cavaliers forward LeBron James, right, drives on Portland Trail Blazers forward Martell Webster during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Portland, Ore., Sunday, Jan. 10, 2010.

Lakers 95, Bucks 77

At Los Angeles, Andrew Bynum had 17 points and a career-high 18 rebounds as Los Angeles avoided its first three-game losing streak in nearly two years.

Shannon Brown added 19 points, Jordan Farmar scored 15 of his 17 in the second half, Kobe Bryant had 12 points on 4 of 21 shooting, and Derek Fisher 11 for the defending NBA champions.

Hakim Warrick had 14 points, Jodie Meeks 12, and Brandon Jennings, Luke Ridnour and Charlie Bell 10 each for the Bucks, who had won three straight but dropped to 5-11 on the road.

Hornets 115, Wizards 110

At Washington, Chris Paul scored eight of his 26 points in the final three minutes to lead New Orleans to its sixth-straight win by beating Washington.

Peja Stojakovic scored 20 points, and Paul added 14 assists for the Hornets, who have won three straight away from home to improve their road record to 5-13 after an abysmal start.

Antawn Jamison tied his season-high with 32 points, and Randy Foye had 23 starting in place of the suspended Gilbert Arenas to set a season-high for the second straight game.

Celtics 114, Raptors 107

At Toronto, Rajon Rondo had 22 points, 13 assists and 10 rebounds for his first triple-double of the season, and Rasheed Wallace scored a season-high 29 points in Boston's seventh straight win over the Raptors.

Wallace made five of Boston's 11 3-pointers. Ray Allen, Paul Pierce and Kendrick Perkins each scored 16 points for Boston, which had lost four of six coming in.

Chris Bosh had 31 points and 13 rebounds, and Andrea Bargnani added 23 points for Toronto.

Carter sidelined with 'mild separation' in shoulder

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Vince Carter's injured left shoulder got a quick test early Saturday morning, and it wasn't from the Orlando Magic's trainers.

Going through an airport in Washington for the team's flight back to Orlando, a security official asked him to raise his hands to be screened.

Carter couldn't lift his left shoulder, which trainers later diagnosed as a "mild separation," putting his return as day to day. But he was still able to make light of the situation.

"It was funny. He didn't know. He's like, 'Sir, you got to put your arm up,'" Carter recalled.

Carter doesn't expect to miss much time.

While he was out of the lineup against the Atlanta Hawks on Saturday night, Carter said his shoulder is mostly sore. He went through some basketball motions Saturday and is already undergoing treatment.

Carter said he hopes to be back as soon as Tuesday, when Orlando begins a 4-game Western trip at Sacramento. Trainers told Carter the injury does not require surgery.

"It's all the same to me. Sprain, separation, pain—they all intertwine to me," he said. "But it made for some uncomfortable sleep last night, that's for sure."

Orlando coach Stan Van Gundy said J.J. Redick will start in Carter's place and everybody else will have to fill in the gaps until Carter returns. Even Van Gundy doesn't expect that to be long.

"It's just a matter of getting the inflammation and the pain down to where he can handle it and then he'll be able to play," Van Gundy said. "I don't think it's a long-term thing by any stretch of the imagination."

The injury comes at the worst time for the Magic.

They've lost four straight games—all to teams with losing records—for the first time since February 2007, the year before Van Gundy arrived. Orlando's trip also includes stops at the Los Angeles Lakers, Denver and Portland.

Heat 94, Clippers 84

At Los Angeles, Chris Kaman had 22 points and 14 rebounds, Baron Davis had 11 points and 14 assists, and the revitalized Clippers won their sixth straight home game.

Eric Gordon scored 17 points and Rasual Butler added 13 for the Clippers. Dwyane Wade scored 24 points for the Heat, who have lost five of their past seven games.

Spurs 97, Nets 85

At San Antonio, Manu Ginobili scored 21 points and San Antonio sent New Jersey to its 34th loss in 37 games this season.

Spurs center Ian Mahinmi made his first appearance of the season memorable with career highs of 15 points and nine rebounds.

Brook Lopez scored 28 points and Yi Jianlian added 16 for New Jersey.

Ogilvy starts season by winning again at Kapalua

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP)—Whether he's running away from the field or chasing from behind, Geoff Ogilvy has found the secret to winning the season-opening SBS Championship at Kapalua.

A year after winning by six shots, Ogilvy rallied from a two-shot deficit with 10 holes to play with smart decisions and flawless golf for a 6-under 67 and a one-shot victory over Rory Sabbatini on Sunday.

Ogilvy posted his eighth consecutive round in the 60s on the Plantation Course. He joined fellow Australian Stuart Appleby as the only repeat winners since this tournament moved to Kapalua in 1999, and he became only the seventh player in the 58 years of this winners-only tournament to win in consecutive years.

"We knew what we had to do," Ogilvy said. "I'd never been in that situation. I'm happy and excited to get it done. I needed to make birdies and I did."

Even though he trailed in the middle of his round, Ogilvy still had plenty of holes in front of him.

He played short of the par-4 14th, a 272-yard hole where most players were hitting driver, and pitched to 4 feet for birdie. And he took the outright lead with a 5-wood into 25 feet for a two-putt birdie on the 15th.

Sabbatini, who started the final round six shots behind, ran off five straight birdies on the back nine to seize the lead and closed with a 63. He couldn't reach the green on the 663-yard 18th in two, however, and missed a 10-foot birdie putt that ultimately cost him.

"I said to my caddie, 'We need to birdie the last two holes to have a chance,'" Sabbatini said. "The situation was you had to keep moving forward to put pressure on him. I had my opportunity, and unfortunately, it didn't pan out."

Ogilvy took two strong lines on the 17th for a par, then laid up on the 18th to take trouble of play on the left and closed with a par. He finished at 22-under 270 and moved back into the top 10 in the world with his seventh career PGA Tour victory.

It was his first win since the Match Play Championship last February. The trick now is for Ogilvy to keep this form throughout the year, and he hopes he can learn from mistakes a year ago when he tried too hard and practiced more than usual.

He is taking next week off before playing in Abu Dhabi, then returns home to Arizona where his wife is expecting their third child.

U.S. Open champion Lucas Glover's bid to become the second straight wire-to-wire winner at Kapalua ended early when he hit into the hazard on consecutive holes and lost three shots. He closed with a 76 and was 14th in the 28-man field.

Matt Kuchar lingered without seriously threatening, missing several chances on the middle of the back nine as Ogilvy pulled farther ahead. He closed with a 67 and finished alone in third.

Sean O'Hair made all the right moves to give himself a chance. He was at 20 under, two shots out of the lead with a chance to reach the par-5 18th in two. He was quick with his swing and pulled it into the weeds, leading to double bogey and a 68 to finish fourth.

The Kona wind returned again, which makes Kapalua a tough start and finish, with birdies available in between and trouble on any hole with a poor shot. Sabbatini breezed through with a 32 on the front to get in the mix,

"I was just battling the putter the first three days," Sabbatini said. "I came out today not knowing what to expect, and the flat stick showed up early."

Even so, he got some help from the leaders. Ogilvy was in the lead until he pushed his tee shot badly to the right and into the knee-high native grass for a one-shot penalty. Glover followed him into the hazard, and both made bogey.

From the middle of the next fairway, Glover came out of his shot and shoved it into the high grass again, leading to double bogey. While he bounced back with two birdies, a three-putt on the 10th ended his chances.

Sabbatini, a bundle of South African energy who always looks to be in a hurry, wasted no time seizing the lead.

He attacked a dangerous pin on the par-3 11th with an 8-iron for the first of five consecutive birdies, finishing the streak by driving to the back of the green on the 282-yard 14th and hitting his approach to the par-5 15th to 15 feet for another easy birdie.

Both those holes played with the wind at his back. The challenge was the 552-yard 17th, a par 4 that with a sharp drop in elevation and a panoramic view of the Pacific below. Sabbatini hit 5-iron to just outside 12 feet for one of only two birdies in the final round. That was supposed to be the hard part of his hopes for a birdie-birdie finish. But he slightly missed his tee shot on the 18th, didn't get the roll he needed to get down the slope and had to lay up short of the green.

His 10-foot birdie putt caught the right lip, and it ultimately cost him.

In his only other chance to win at Kapalua, he missed a 3 1/2-foot birdie putt on the 18th in 2002 that would have forced a playoff.

"I swear I'll make a putt one of these years on 18," he said.

Pacquiao wraps up deal for Clottey

GREG BEACHAM
AP SPORTS WRITER

Manny Pacquiao will fight March 13 at Cowboys Stadium, but not against Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Pacquiao promoter Bob Arum said Sunday he has finalized a deal to match Pacquiao against Joshua Clottey in a welterweight bout at the new $1.2 billion stadium. Arum moved swiftly to land a lucrative fight for his Filipino star after his contentious negotiations for a megafight with Mayweather fell apart in a prolonged dispute over blood testing.

Arum was in Texas over the weekend to wrap up details for the pay-per-view fight, which will be the first boxing match in the stadium. Top Rank spokesman Lee Samuels said the arena will be configured to seat 50,000 fans for the fight, but the capacity could be raised or lowered.

"This stadium has blown me away," Arum told The Associated Press. "It is the most magnificent facility I've ever seen."

Arum took in the Dallas Cowboys' playoff victory over the Philadelphia Eagles on Saturday night, sitting just two seats from former President George W. Bush. Arum said Bush had the same reaction he's heard repeatedly since negotiations with Mayweather bogged down

"Too bad you didn't get Mayweather, but what difference does it make?" Arum said Bush told him. "Everybody just wants see Pacquiao anyway."

Cowboys owner Jerry Jones reportedly offered a $25 million site fee for the Pacquiao-Mayweather fight, which fell apart over Mayweather's insistence on stringent drug testing and Pacquiao's reluctance to agree. The sides went into mediation to resolve the dispute, but a compromise couldn't be reached.

And though Arum is a longtime New York Giants season ticket-holder, he found common ground with Jones for another major event in the opulent new stadium.

"This is a competitive fight, as competitive as the Cotto fight going in," Arum said. "We got a tremendous deal at the site. It's a big event, and I think we'll do unbelievable."

Although Mayweather's representatives still were holding out hope the Pacquiao fight could be salvaged, Mayweather also is expected to fight March 13 at the MGM Grand Garden in Las Vegas, which would have been the site of his bout with Pacquiao. Paulie Malignaggi has been the most popular contender for that fight.

Calma catches last bus for Golfer of the Year

Jun Calma became the last qualifier for the Fil-Taga Golf Association Golfer of the Year after winning the December Ace tournament last month at the Marianas Country Club.

Calma posted a net score of 66 to top a field of 14 golfers last Dec. 13 at the Marpi golf facility. The 13-handicapper fired a 79 gross.

Ted Malaran finished second with a net 67 after the 18-handicapper shot a gross of 85. Mariana Resort and Spa staff Jason Gatdula and Adony Matutino, meanwhile, were tied at third place with their identical score of 68.

Gatdula had a gross of 89 and a handicap of 21, while Matutino's 19 handicap trimmed his 87 gross.

Other players, with their net scores in parenthesis, were as follows: Gil Faller (71); Larry Pascual (71); Mando Guban (73); Joe Miranda (74); Freddie Cataluna (75); Nazareno Ortiz (76); Rene Batallones (80); John Matsumoto (80); Mike Cruz (83); and Richard Meimban (86).

Established in 1993, Fil-Taga's tournaments operate under a computer-controlled handicap system that creates parity among players in the A and B Flights.

A Fil-Taga Ace of the Month champion is crowned monthly. Regular tournaments are scheduled once a month, normally every third Sunday. Green fees are in the $35 to $40 price range for most tournaments.

Its 2008-2009 set of officers are led by president Mike Cruz, vice president Jhun Calma, secretary Manny Po, treasurer Arnaldo Guban, and board of directors Fr. Manny Corcuera , Jhun Dela Cruz, Ted Malaran, Gil Faller, Rey Ferraz, Greg De Torres, Rene Batallones, Nestor Siruelo, and George Sablan. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

MINOR

From Page 28

match was played in less than an hour with Minor and Ahern-Briggs bowing to Kelly and Maggie Snowdon, 1-8.

In other results, Minor's teammates, Fiji's Annie Shannon and Tarani Kamoe, are still in contention in the main draw of the girls' 14-and-under singles, making it to the quarterfinal round.

Shannon, which drew a bye in the first round of the upper half of the main draw, won over eight-seeded Hope Curtis-McDonald, 6-4, 6-2, and Georgia Louise Sim, 6-0, 6-1, to move into the Round of 8 against tournament top seed Sonja Balic.

Kamoe is in the lower half of the main draw and prevailed over Olivia Toner, 6-0, 6-0, and stunned second seed Michaella Shand, 6-2, 6-4, to make it to Round 4. Kamoe then nailed her third straight win when she topped Mairead Cleary, 6-0, 6-2, to advance to the quarterfinals against No. 5 pick Taylor Capannolo.

Kamoe, Shannon, and Minor are representing the ITF Pacific Oceania Touring Team in the tournament in Albury. Their third and last event will be the 2010 Victorian Junior Grasscourt Championships, which will be held in Wodonga from Jan. 13 to 17.

After completing the three tournaments, Minor and company will return to Melbourne to watch preliminary games in the 2010 Australian Open.

THREE ATHLETES

From Page 28

Guam with a surprising 10-7 win over tournament No. 1 seed Marten Lai in the quarterfinals. In the all-CNMI semifinals, Decena won over teammate Rafael Jones, 10-3.

In the boys' 18-and-under doubles, Decena teamed up with Tan and won two games to top the event. Decena and Tan defeated Andy and Nathan Nutting, 10-0, and Gerard and Paul Llanura, 10-1.

Olopai, meanwhile, earned NMASA members' nod after conquering the RGA Club Championships early last month. The 8-handicapper Olopai shot a gross 77 for a net 69 to win the club championship against 11 other monthly winners and hoist the coveted Placido M. Tagabuel trophy.

Olopai qualified for the club championship after notching the February Ace. He never missed a single qualifying tournament in 2009, earning him the Sid K. Peter award. The Sid K. Peter plum is given to an RGA member who played the most rounds in a year.

Kabiriel, for his part, was cited for his victory in the 2009 Annual Christmas Island Relay. He was one of the only four runners who completed the 13.7 mile-long race from the southern parking lot of Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio to the Last Command Post in Marpi alone. Other participants in the relay had five members in each team completing the race. Kabiriel timed in at 1:44:06 in the soloist division, eclipsing his 2008 record of at 1:47:35. His time last year shattered the 1:48:50 Ronald Villafria posted in 2007.

LEAGUE

From Page 28

win despite trailing by only one run after two complete innings, as it scored only two runs in the last five innings. Bob Castro and John Cepeda reached home plate in the fourth inning to give Advance two more runs, but the team was without a run in the third and fifth to seventh inning.

The X-Terminators are the lone squad in the 21-team field that has yet to win a single game after falling to a 0-5 record.

Centerfielder Kent Kalen and third baseman Pete Teigita made four RBIs each in Natibu's win, while catcher Dave Kapileo added three RBIs. B.J. Sablan, Kalen, Quitano Kapileo, and Teigita drilled one homer apiece.

SaiPal 12, Blazers 2

Matching Natibu's 5-0 record for a three-way tie for first place with Island Rebels was SaiPal, which beat the Blazers, 12-2.

SaiPal's defense allowed Blazers to score only in the second and third inning with Joe Lifoifoi's single driving Jess Taitano home in the second and Rodney Lifoifoi's sacrifice fly bringing John Teigita back to the plate in the third.

On offense, SaiPal drew two RBIs each from second baseman Hector Efraim, extra hitter Luis Ngriraikelau, and outfielder Jason Hayes. SaiPal's five others runs were all earned and came from five different batters.

Calikano 14, Berdax 13

Calikano snapped its two-game winning skid after surviving Berdax, 14-13.

Kelvin Kapileo's two-run homer at the top of the seventh moved Berdax within one, but Calikano hung in there with two defensive stops.

With one out, Berdax's fourth batter Dave Apatang was hit by pitch and automatically advanced to first. However, he was tagged out to second for the second out and the game ended in Calikano's favor when leftfielder John Tenorio Jr. caught Ben Taisacan's fly ball.

Calikano improved to a 2-3 slate, while Berdax dropped to a 1-3 mark.

Freedom Air 29, Team Fuegu 7

Freedom Air was on cruise control, leading to a 28-7 demolition of Team Fuegu.

Leftfielder Shane Yamada led Freedom Air with seven RBIs on a 3-for-5 performance at bat. Yamada made two homers and scored three runs. Second baseman Mel Manahane chipped in four RBIs, while third baseman Ken Villagomez, catcher Mabel Ngirngemelas, and rightfielder Chris Castro added three RBIs each.

Freedom Air now has a 4-2 slate, while Team Fuegu has only one win to show in six games.

GGRRRRT

From Page 28

prizes were also given to fourth placer Team Z ($100) and IT&E $75) . JOS Corporation finished the 2009 season with a 47-25 record, RR Consulting had 43-29, and TEAM X and IT&E posted identical records of 38-34.

Ensure failed to finish in the Top 5, but won three special awards in team event. The Raymond Angeles-led Ensure prevailed in the high game scratch (1,049 pinfalls), high series scratch (3,033), and high series with handicap (3,279). IT&E was runner-up in both the high game scratch (945) and high series scratch (2,760).

Split Happens foiled an Ensure sweep of special team awards when the former topped the high game with handicap, posting 1,141 pinfalls against the latter's 1,139.

In the individual category, GGRRRRT's Raymond Zapanta went home with the most awards. Raymond won the high game scratch (267), tying Split Happens' Nick Gutierrez. Raymond's two other victories were in the high series scratch (716) and high average (205.5). The high average category had a mother and son tandem as winners after Raymond's mother, Gigi, won in the women's division with a score of 162.55.

Besides winning the high game scratch, Gutierrez also prevailed in the high game with handicap, recording 283 pinfalls against Dannie Robles and Ferdie Generoso's 271.

Robert Perez also made it to the winners circle when he topped the high series with handicap, tallying 729 pinfalls against Raymond's 719.

In the women's division, Ron Cal swept the high game scratch (288), high game with handicap (314), high series scratch (673), and high series with handicap (751).

Two more awards were given at the conclusion of the 2009 season with IT&E's Chester Bai taking the most improved player in the men's division and Team X's Cora Muna notching the same title in the women's category.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	26	9	.743	—
Toronto	19	19	.500	8 1/2
New York	15	21	.417	11 1/2
Philadelphia	11	25	.306	15 1/2
New Jersey	3	34	.081	24

Southeast Division

Orlando	25	12	.676	—
Atlanta	23	13	.639	1 1/2
Miami	18	17	.514	6
Charlotte	16	19	.457	8
Washington	12	23	.343	12

Central Division

Cleveland	29	10	.744	—
Milwaukee	15	19	.441	11 1/2
Chicago	15	20	.429	12
Detroit	11	24	.314	16
Indiana	11	25	.306	16 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	25	12	.676	—
San Antonio	22	13	.629	2
Houston	21	16	.568	4
New Orleans	19	16	.543	5
Memphis	18	18	.500	6 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	23	14	.622	—
Portland	23	16	.590	1
Oklahoma City	20	16	.556	2 1/2
Utah	20	17	.541	3
Minnesota	8	30	.211	15 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	29	8	.784	—
Phoenix	23	14	.622	6
L.A. Clippers	17	18	.486	11
Sacramento	15	21	.417	13 1/2
Golden State	11	24	.314	17

Yesterday's Games
Boston 114, Toronto 107
New Orleans 115, Washington 110
L.A. Clippers 94, Miami 84
San Antonio 97, New Jersey 85
Cleveland 106, Portland 94
L.A. Lakers 95, Milwaukee 77

SBS CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP) — Scores Saturday from the SBS Championship, a $5.6 million US PGA Tour winners-only event at 7,411-yard, par-73 Plantation Course at Kapalua (FedExCup points in parentheses):

FINAL ROUND

Geoff Ogilvy (500), $1,120,000	69-66-68-67—270
Rory Sabbatini (300), $645,000	70-68-70-63—271
Matt Kuchar (190), $426,000	67-68-71-67—273
Sean O'Hair (123), $300,000	68-67-71-68—274
Martin Laird (123), $300,000	67-68-69-70—274
Kenny Perry (92), $208,333	70-67-70-68—275
Retief Goosen (92), $208,333	70-69-67-69—275
Ryan Moore (92), $208,333	69-68-68-70—275
Stewart Cink (80), $185,000	68-69-69-70—276
Steve Stricker (68), $160,000	73-70-68-66—277
Paul Casey (68), $160,000	70-69-69-69—277
Pat Perez (68), $160,000	71-70-67-69—277
Angel Cabrera (68), $160,000	68-68-70-71—277
John Rollins (57), $130,000	68-66-72-72—278
Lucas Glover (57), $130,000	66-65-71-76—278
Dustin Johnson (55), $110,000	67-71-72-69—279
Nick Watney (55), $110,000	67-71-70-71—279
Zach Johnson (53), $95,000	72-69-71-68—280
Y.E. Yang (52), $90,000	70-74-66-71—281
Stephen Ames (51), $85,000	71-69-71-71—282
Brian Gay (50), $83,000	72-71-70-70—283
Nathan Green (49), $81,000	67-70-77-72—286
Troy Matteson (48), $78,000	73-70-73-71—287
Jerry Kelly (48), $78,000	69-70-74-74—287
Bo Van Pelt (46), $74,000	72-70-73-73—288
Michael Bradley (46), $74,000	73-72-71-72—288
Heath Slocum (44), $70,500	75-71-71-73—290
Mark Wilson (44), $70,500	74-71-70-75—290

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

BUDWEISER SOFTBALL STANDINGS

Island Rebels	5	0
Natibu	5	0
SaiPal	5	0
Man Amigos	5	1
Chura	4	1
San Roque	3	1
6-Pack	4	2
Freedom Air Flyers	4	2
Ur Balls	3	2
Hitz	3	3
Blazers	2	3
Red Eye	2	3
G-Ballers	2	4
Calikano-Falcons	2	3
Berdax	1	3
Team Familia	1	3
Lancheros	1	4
Team Fuegu	1	5
Ramblers	1	5
Go For Broke	1	5
X-Terminators	0	5

2010 MTEC Tank 2 Tank Aquathon

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan swimmers do a drill before plunging into the waters off former AJ's Restaurant in Susupe.

Mamiko Oshima-Berger, right, gets her race number from a volunteer in the 2010 MTEC Tank 2 Tank Aquathon held on Saturday.

Swimmers head back to the shore to start the run part of the aquathon.

Saipan World Resort's Sheilla Agpaoa, left, and Vener Urena are all smiles after completing the race.

Swimmers in the 8-and-under and 16-and-under age groups sprint from the starting line.

Joshua Berger raises his hands as he heads to the finish line.

Open division winners Stuart Smith and Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel pose at the finish line after completing the race.

Saipan Swim Club's Andrew Kimball puts on his shoes for the run portion of the race.

Two runners in the 8-and-under age group sprint to the finish line.

Soloist division top finisher Andres Buitrago smiles as he nears the finish line.

Dansby's fumble return in OT gives Cards 51-45 win

Old master Kurt Warner and playoff newcomer Aaron Rodgers staged a passing duel to rival any the NFL has seen.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

LeBron scores 41 as Cavs hold off Blazers

LeBron James had 41 points and 10 rebounds and the Cleveland Cavaliers held off a fourth-quarter Portland rally to beat the Trail Blazers 106-94 on Sunday night.

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Minor struggles in Land Down Under

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI junior netter Thea Minor was a bit off in her second tournament in Australia, winning only one game in the 2010 Post Margaret Court Cup at the Albury Grasscourts, in Albury, New South Wales.

Minor was entered in the main draw of the girls' 14-and-under singles and suffered a tough loss to Australia's Matea Arambasic in two sets on Friday, 2-6, 6-7 (3). Minor and Arambasic' duel in the first round was played for one hour and 47 minutes due to an extended second set.

With the loss, Minor fell to the loser's bracket, but quickly recovered with a 6-3, 6-3 triumph against Daphne Mantzanidis on Sunday to move a win away from advancing to the quarterfinals. Minor's victory over Mantzanidis was sweet revenge for the Commonwealth bet, as the Australian netter defeater her in the first round of the 2010 Ducats GV Championships at the Shepparton Lawn Tennis Club last week, 6-2, 6-3.

In Round 4, which was played on the same day the CNMI netter gained her first win in Albury, Minor was paired against Laura Kelly. It was Minor and Kelly's second meeting this year, as the two junior netters also collided in the finals of the consolation draw in the 2010 Ducats GV Championships. Minor failed to avenge her 4-8 defeat to Kelly in Shepparton when the Aussie won anew, 6-3, 6-3.

The CNMI bet also played in the girls' 14-and-under doubles and teamed up with Bella Grace Ahern-Briggs. The

See MINOR on Page 26

Thea Minor, seen here in action during a local tournament last year, struggled in her second tournament in Australia, winning only one match in Albury, New South Wales.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Decena

Olopai

Kabiriel

Three athletes named top performers in December

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Three individuals filled the last slots for candidates for NMASA's top performers of 2009 after being named athletes of the month for December.

Tennis' Benjie Decena was named NMASA Male Student Athlete for December, while golfer Tars Olopai and long distance runner Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel were recognized as co-Male Athletes during Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association's monthly meeting on Thursday.

Decena, Olopai, and Kabiriel completed the list of athletes who will vie for the four coveted awards next month, the 2009 NMASA Male and Female Student Athletes of the Year and the Male and Female Athletes of the Year. They will go up against monthly winners from January to November.

Decena took the December title after ruling the boys' 18-and-under singles and doubles competition of the 2009 Guam Junior Open Championships at the Ninete Tennis Centre in Hagatna late last month.

The Tinian netter stunned second-seed Michael Tan in the singles finals, 10-5. Decena started his title bid in

See THREE ATHLETES on Page 26

GGRRRRT rules Friday Night League

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

GGRRRRT reigned supreme in the 25th Philippine Bowling Association-Capital Bowling Center's Friday Night League, concluding the 2009 season with the league best 51-21 record.

GGRRRRT bested eight other teams to take home the top purse of $550. The team was composed of Gina Sablan, Gigi, Raymond, Ross, and Russelle Zapanta, Rene Cariaso, and Tom Bernardo. The team's name was formed from the first letter of the names of each member.

Besides the cash prize, a championship trophy was awarded to GGRRRRT during a brief award ceremony at the Capital Bowling Center in Garapan on Friday.

Also receiving trophies and $300 and $200, respectively, were runner-up JOS Corporation and third placer RR Consulting. Cash

See GGRRRRT on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Members of GGRRRRT pose with their championship trophy during the awards ceremony for the 25th Philippine Bowling Association-Capital Bowling Center's Friday Night League on Friday at the Capital Bowling Center in Garapan.

Natibu foils Advance's bid for first win

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Natibu recovered from a slow start en route to a 22-13 victory over Advance X-Terminators during their game in Chamolinian Softball Association's 2009 Budweiser Slow-pitch Softball League on Friday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

Natibu fell behind, 3-7, in the first inning, but came out at the bottom of the second inning with its guns smoking to keep its perfect record in five games. Natibu hit four homers in the second inning and added five more runs to grab the lead, 12-11, and never looked back.

Advance failed to regain the driver's seat and a possible first

See NATIBU on Page 26

Clifton Sillil, which plays shortstop for SaiPal, went 1-for-2 in the team's 12-2 win over the Blazers in the Chamolinian softball league on Friday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO